



DRY STONE WALLING ASSOCIATION OF GREAT BRITAIN

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Minutes of the meeting of the DSWA Management Committee held on Saturday 5 September 2009 at the Crooklands Hotel, commencing at 10.00am

Present: R Love (Chairman); A Devonport (Deputy Chairman); A Loudon (Deputy Chairman); B Jones (Vice President); P Webley (Vice President); S Mitchell (Central Scotland); P Davies (Cheshire); P Adair (Cumbria); D Seed (Mid Lancs); P Moorhead (Northumbria); R Kitchen (Otley & Yorkshire Dales); E Fort (Pennine); C Jenkins (South Wales); R Stockall (South West England); Q Grosvenor (West Yorkshire); D Gunn (Elected Member).

ACTION BY

In Attendance: Ms M Parnell, Mrs S Addy (Hon Treasurer) & Miss A Shaw.

M09.30 **Apologies:** Apologies were received on behalf of Lord Cavendish, J Atkinson, M Batty, M Booth, A Brown-Jackson, N Coombey, K France, D Griffiths, B Hough, Ms B Koo, N Muir, T Norris, G Pritchard, Mrs J Walker, D Walmesley-Cotham, J Wilson, Dorset & North Wales branches.

M09.31 **Chairman's Opening Remarks**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Mr Love was happy to report to the meeting that Sally Hodgson from Derbyshire had successfully gained her Master Craftsman qualification recently and the certificate was presented to her by Derbyshire branch the previous day. She is only the third lady to gain this certificate and congratulations were recorded.

Since the last meeting there had also been two presentations for projects within the Pinnacle Award Scheme. The restored walled garden at Monk Coniston was awarded a Certificate of Merit, which was presented to The National Trust by Lord Cavendish at a ceremony in June. A full Pinnacle Award was granted to Riverdale Stone for the construction of a dry stone house; the presentation was made at the RHS Hampton Court Flower Show, where a small replica house had been constructed.

M09.32 **To confirm minutes of previous meeting – 6 June 2009**

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

M09.33 **Matters arising from previous minutes**

Progress was being made with regard to Direct Debits and mandates have been sent to all current members. It was encouraging to note that a number had already been returned to the office. A copy of the blank mandate would be made available to branches and new members would be sent a copy in their welcome pack to encourage them to renew subscriptions in this way in future.

A SHAW

M09.34 **Correspondence**

Comments on agenda items had been received from some branches, which would be included in the discussions later in the meeting.

M09.35 **Financial Reports**

M09.35a **Current Finances:** copies of the current finances were tabled and the following points noted.

- A couple of invoices for the Waller & Dyker had been allocated to leaflet printing in the previous financial figures.
- The formal accounts for the year ended 31 August 2008 had been sent to all committee members.
- The Gift Aid return had now been received, totalling £4,712, which would be shown on next quarter's figures. A meeting has been arranged with J Wilson, H Robinson and A Shaw to discuss the back claims that could be made.

J WILSON/
A SHAW

M09.35b **Current Membership:** As at the beginning of September the membership were as follows; a total of 1226 which includes 940 Open, 243 Professional, 21 Corporate and 15 Junior members.

At this point Miss Shaw left the meeting

M09.35c **Staff Contracts:** Mrs Addy reminded the meeting that office salaries were due for annual review on 1 October 2009.

S ADDY

Miss Shaw returned to the meeting at this point.

M09.36 **Constitution Review**

The latest draft document 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. He pointed out that there was still no further advice or information from the Government in relation to the timescale of the introduction of the CIO format, although it was unlikely anything would be produced before April 2010. The following points were raised/noted during the discussion that took place.

Trustees

- As the proposed new structure evolved, it was important to strike a balance between the way in which the Association was currently run and something that was more manageable. P Webley expressed his concerns about the perceived loss of branch input to the running of the DSWA. It was noted that safeguards would be put in place to make sure that branch input would continue and that there would be a good mixture of skills held by those appointed as Trustees.
- A suggestion had been made that the number of Trustees should be reduced to 6. However, this was not considered to be enough to ensure the mixture of skills, etc required and the number would remain at 12, as previously agreed.
- Under the proposed new structure, those appointed as Trustees would have a greater understanding of the legal and financial requirements of the role and would have the interests of the Association as a whole at heart, not just at a local level.
- A number of members were concerned about the financial liability that currently rests with all Trustees should any financial problems arise with the Association. It was noted that hosting the International Conference should not pose a problem, as the costs involved were less than the current assets of the Association.

Finances

- As previously discussed, branches would continue to hold and operate their own bank accounts for branch use. A form of words was needed to ensure that branches could have delegated powers in order to apply for local grants and projects, as is presently the case. A suitable form of words was required to clarify this section. Any suggestions should be forwarded to B Jones.

ALL

Branches

- The way in which members are allocated to branches still needs to be clarified. At present there are two systems in operation. It was agreed to refer this issue to the Membership Group for consideration and for it to report back at the next meeting.

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Association Name

- As part of the constitutional updates, it would be possible to amend the name of the Association. The suggestion was for it to be changed to "Dry Stone Walling Association of the United Kingdom (DSWA-UK), which would also include Northern Ireland and the Isle of Man. It was further suggested that the Association should be referred to simply as the "DSWA" on a day to day basis but the above name would be on legal documents, and so on.

B JONES

Financial Year

- At present, the current constitution requires the AGM to be held within three months of the financial year end although accounts do not have to be submitted to the Charity Commission until nine months after the year end. At the recent Officer Group meeting, a suggestion had been made to move either/both the financial year end and the AGM, primarily to ensure that the Annual Report included the inspected accounts for the Association, which is not currently the case. After a short discussion, the Committee agreed that the financial year end would remain at 31 August but that the AGM would be moved to either March or April. This would allow enough time to get the accounts inspected and included in the Annual Report. B Jones would include this decision in future amendments of the constitutional documents.

B JONES

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. A revised set of draft rules would be produced ahead of the next committee meeting.

B JONES

M09.37

Fundraising

There had been a number of donations received since the termination of Ms Sinclair's contract. R Love also reported that he had attended a very useful meeting with a potential donor, although any support from this source would be specifically targeted to Scotland and/or the West Midlands. Alternative fundraising options were being pursued but the Association did not have anyone available to for this area of work, specifically to continue targeting grant making trusts.

The meeting was advised that the fundraising brochures were now in the office. It was agreed that branches should collect two or three copies and see if they could be used in a local context to attract funding. Additional copies would be available on request. The DSWA office should be kept informed of any grant applications in this respect.

A suggestion was made that model letters could be produced and sent to branches to use in conjunction with the brochure. It was agreed that these items would be sent out.

R LOVE/
A SHAW

M09.38

International Dry Stone Walling Congress

Following the previously circulated paper, R Love provided an update on the background work that had been carried out so far. A very useful meeting had taken place with LEADER colleagues regarding possible funding for the conference. A Project Officer had been assigned to the application, which was seen as a beneficial move. It was noted that if LEADER funding were successful, it would also be possible to apply for other public funds. A suggestion was made that Grassroots funding might be available to local branches seeking funding to host "satellite" events either side of the main conference dates, which

ALL

would encourage delegates to extend their visit.

Following a lively discussion, where members concerns about the costs involved with hosting the conference were noted, a vote was taken on whether the DSWA should host the event. This was carried by 12 in favour of the conference taking place in Cumbria in 2010. A further vote was taken and it was agreed that the Association could budget up to £40,000 of its own reserves for the event if needed.

R LOVE

M09.39 Forward Strategy

M09.39a **Job Specifications:** Draft job specifications for the Training & Education Co-ordinator and the Office Administrator roles had been previously circulated. It was noted that some of the money received from the Fundraising Appeal was specifically for the educational role and funders would expect a progress report on how the money had been used. It was agreed to contact the funders to explain the current situation but that the Association should explore the possibility of establishing a six-month contract initially, which would focus on developing the educational role further. It was noted that LEADER funding might also be available for a training co-ordinator role, which would not be affected by any funding awarded for the conference.

OFFICER
GROUP

M09.39b **Communications:** It was acknowledged that better use of the website should be used to promote and circulate information about the Association. Branches are not yet able to access the national website to update information although this item will be moved forward as a priority in the coming weeks. It was noted that where branches have their own website, a link is established from the DSWA site and it is then up to the branch to update information.

A SHAW

M09.39c **Display Material:** Only one branch had responded with the offer of good quality photographs. Further work would be done on this area in due course.

A SHAW

M09.40 Membership Group Update

A Devonport reported that the group had been quiet recently although it was hoped that a meeting would be arranged for later in the month. It was agreed that a report should be sent to the office before the end of October for circulation with the next Management Committee agenda.

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M09.41 Officer Group

It was noted that the draft Memorandum of Understanding with Craven College had been sent to the college for comment. The minutes would be circulated.

A SHAW

M09.42 Management Committee Co-ordinator Reports

M09.42a **Craft Skills Group:** Costs of tests would need to be increased with effect from 1 January 2010 to take into account an increase made by Lantra Awards. The proposed new rates were Initial £100; Intermediate £135; Advanced Part A £120 and Part B £85, which were agreed by the Management Committee. It was further noted that there were no plans to increase the Examiner day rate or mileage rate for the coming year, which would remain at £180 and 35p respectively. This was also agreed by the Management Committee meeting.

Minor amendments had also been made to the marking levels at Initial stage. Marks had been increased by 5 on each of the building first and second lifts, and reduced on the general approach and safety section, leaving the overall mark as before. A reprint of the booklet would be arranged, which would cost in the region of £600.

A SHAW

The National Occupational Standards document on walling structures had been submitted to the regulators for approval and would form part of the heritage skills suite of documents once approved.

There had been no further details about the Lantra Apprenticeship in dry stone walling, which has been subsumed within the more generic scheme covering Environmental Conservation.

The meeting had discussed the CITB Construction Skills Levy and Grant scheme. Dry stone walling is considered to be "in-scope" with construction and the levy therefore applies to all professional wallers whose wage bills are greater than £80,000. The scheme is aimed at increasing the level of training within the industry, as grants are available for a variety of training opportunities. Details are available on the Construction Skills website, www.cskills.org. It was agreed that the Association would contact all current professional members to ensure they are aware of this situation.

R LOVE/
A SHAW

P Webley advised the meeting that he would be standing down as Craft Skills Co-ordinator and a replacement would be needed.

In response to a query about Instructors being reminded about teaching at a level below their own qualifications, it was agreed that information would be sent out, following a previous action point that had been overlooked.

P WEBLEY/
A SHAW

- M09.42b Grants:** Nothing to report.
- M09.42c International:** No report.
- M09.42d Pinnacle Awards:** Two applications have been received. The first was a garden project at Bowness on Windermere, comprising retaining walls, steps, terraces, stone panels and paved areas. The project has been inspected and recommended for a Certificate of Merit. The second project was at Rathmell and featured the construction of a large ha-ha and dry stone bridge. The work on this project was carried out by students from Craven College under the supervision of Stephen Harrison. This work has also been inspected and recommended for a Certificate of Merit.
- Photos of both projects were circulated to the meeting and it was agreed that both projects should be awarded the respective Certificates of Merit in the Landscaping category. A LOUDON/
A SHAW
- A Loudon advised the meeting that he wished to stand down from the role of co-ordinator but would be happy to remain in position until a replacement had been found.
- M09.42e Ronnie Ball Award:** There had been no new applications. P Davies expressed his wish to stand down from the co-ordinator role. He felt that the scheme perhaps needed some new ideas to reinvigorate it. Any changes to the scheme would be with the agreement of Lizzie Ball. Any ideas for promoting the scheme should be sent to the office. ALL
- M09.42f Branch of the Year:** J Atkinson had previously expressed a wish to relinquish the role he has played in the Branch of the Year competition and a replacement judge would be needed. Suggestions should be sent to the office. At present the team consists of J Atkinson, C Evans (Royal Welsh Agricultural Society) and D Goulder. ALL
- M09.43 Annual General Meeting 2009**
AGM Agenda: The previously circulated agenda was agreed. It was further agreed that it was not appropriate at present to include the motion in relation to the CIO. The Committee was reminded that nomination forms for the election of Office Bearers were available and completed forms must be returned to the office by 25 September at the latest. ALL
- Bookings are being received for the Members' Weekend, this year being held near Crickhowell in South Wales. Speakers are being arranged for the event and a visit to The Big Pit is planned for the Sunday.
- M09.44 Hundred Club**
 The following draws were made:
- | | | |
|-----------|--------------------|--|
| July | 2% J Smith (11) | 1% J Farish (76) & John Wilson (65) |
| August | 2% C Noble (108) | 1% M Lee (87) & I Weston (119) |
| September | 2% J Murton (7) | 1% R Humphrey-Taylor (3) & J Beard (153) |
| October | 2% I Mitchell (45) | 1% J Gittins (37) & J Paton (52) |
- The Committee agreed to continue the Hundred Club for 2009/2010. A SHAW
- M09.45 Any Other Business**
- M09.45a Discussion Forum:** There had been a recent incident of misuse on the Discussion Forum. At present all those on the discussion web have to give a proper email and a password. They can then post freely on the site, whether a member or not. The Committee agreed that all non-members on the site should be required to participate via a moderator. Any DSWA member who does not adhere to the rules of the forum and who posts inappropriate material will have their free posting ability removed and will have to go via a moderator, who would remove inappropriate material before the posting is released or not. Likewise, any non-member misusing the forum would not be approved by the moderators so would not get their postings released on to the site. This should take place with immediate effect. It was further suggested that there should be a disclaimer on the site, saying that the information posted was not necessarily that of the Association or its Officers. R LOVE
- M09.45b Construction Skills Certificate Scheme (CSCS):** CSCS was set up to help the construction industry to improve quality and reduce accidents. CSCS cards are increasingly being demanded as proof of occupational competence by contractors, public and private clients and others. Anyone working on a construction site is likely to need such a card in the future, which could affect dry stone wallers. Details of the scheme are available on the following website, www.cscs.uk.com The Association should be aware of the requirements and it was agreed that A Devonport and D Gunn would produce a short summary of the details, which would be circulated ahead of the next meeting. A DEVONPORT/
D GUNN
- M09.45c New Branches:** In response to a query about the activities of the two most recent branches, it was noted that the North East Scotland branch has been rather quiet recently, mainly due to the non-DSWA workload of the branch officers. However, it was further noted that Central Scotland branch had offered to try and help out with some events, which had been gratefully accepted.
- The Dorset branch is proving very successful with training courses and test days having been successfully carried out. There are over 20 members in the branch, which was encouraging to hear.

M09.45d Insurance: A query was raised with regard to insurance cover of branch equipment, etc which is not stored at a member's address/premises. This would be checked with NFU.

A SHAW

M09.45e Music Project: At the Members' Weekend last year, Dave & Mary Goulder were working on a musical project to celebrate Dave's 65th birthday. For those interested in music/dance projects this is now complete and available on CD direct from Dave Goulder.

M09.29 Date of Next meeting

The next meeting will take place on Saturday 5 December 2009 commencing at 10am at the Westmorland County Showground. Amendments to minutes/agenda items/papers should be sent to the office by 31 October at the latest.

P Webley advised the meeting that he was resigning from his national roles within the Association, as he was not able to accept the way in which the Association was moving forward. He was thanked for his contributions and advice over the years, which it would be shame to lose although it was hoped that the Association would continue to develop, on the strength of what had been achieved in previous years.

dswa/mancttee/sept09mins

Approved ...*R Love*

Date: *5 December 2009*