



**DRY STONE WALLING ASSOCIATION
OF GREAT BRITAIN**

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**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Dry Stone Walling Association
held on Saturday 12 March 2016 at the Celtic Royal Hotel, Caernarfon**

Present: Mr R Stockall (Chairman), Mrs T Blackwell (Deputy Chairman),
Mr A Brown-Jackson, Mr N Coombey, Mr C Hardman, Mr R Ingles, Dr B Jones, Mr A Loudon (Craft Skills
Coordinator), Mr R Love and 18 members as recorded in the attendance book.

In Attendance: Miss A Shaw (Office Administrator).

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and expressed the Association's thanks to Sean Adcock for organising the venue and the interesting visit to Caernarfon Castle, enjoyed by members beforehand.

AGM16.1 Apologies

Apologies were received from Lord & Lady Cavendish and 5 members as recorded.

AGM16.2 Minutes of the Annual General Meeting 2015

That the minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 7 March 2015 be adopted was proposed by R Stockall and seconded by A Brown-Jackson. There was a majority vote of 22 in favour, with none against. The minutes were therefore agreed and signed accordingly.

AGM16.3 Annual Report

That the Annual Report for 2014/2015 as presented by the Chairman be adopted was proposed by M Booth and seconded by Mrs T Blackwell. Copies of the report were available.

The Chairman was delighted to announce that His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales had kindly agreed to continue as Patron of the Dry Stone Walling Association for a further five year period.

A summary of the Association's work over the last year was given and the following points highlighted.

During the last few years, the Association has been considering whether to move to become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), replacing the existing registered charity status. However, after lengthy and detailed discussions and legal advice from a charity law specialist, the Trustee Board did not consider that such a change would be of significant benefit and the charitable status of the Association will remain as a registered charity. Thanks were recorded to all those members who have been involved in this complex piece of work over the years.

There had been two changes to the Trustee Board following the AGM in 2015. Philip Dolphin and Jim Hanson were elected and replaced Sean Adcock and Alan Devonport. Unfortunately, neither was able to attend the meeting. The Honorary Treasurer continues to monitor the financial reporting systems to ensure they are clear and easy to understand and thanks were recorded to Mick Booth for his diligence over the year.

Membership figures remained fairly static throughout the year. New members needed to be encouraged to get involved in branch and national activities in order to ensure the Association has a thriving future.

The HLF funded project is progressing well and it was pleasing to note that the Bursary Trainees had all been successful in gaining the Level 1 Craftsman Certification qualification and were working towards the next level of certificate. Regular updates on the project are provided through the Waller & Dyker. Thanks were recorded to Mrs Clarkson for her continued hard work in ensuring this project continues to move forward satisfactorily.

On page 3 of the Annual Report a small point of order was noted: Andrew Loudon was in fact the Craft Skills Coordinator and not a Deputy Chairman. With this item clarified the report was agreed by a majority vote of 21 in favour with one against.

A total of 22 voting papers had been returned. A vote of thanks was recorded to Mrs Patricia Bell, EU Election Observer, for acting as Returning Officer for the voting forms.

AGM16.4 Accounts

That the inspected accounts for the year ended 31 August 2015 be adopted was proposed by M Booth and seconded by R Love. Copies of the accounts were available at the meeting.

As mentioned above, the Honorary Treasurer had been unable to attend the meeting. A summary report had been prepared and was read out to the meeting. It was encouraging to note that the large deficit identified a number of years ago, as a worst case scenario, had not come to pass and the Association continues to carefully monitor income and expenditure.

Updated Financial Procedures have been developed for branches and Head Office and were effective from the new financial year at the beginning of September.

Thanks were recorded to branches and other donors for their support during the year, in particular those who have generously contributed towards the match funding of the Heritage Lottery Fund project.

There were no questions about the accounts, which were approved by a majority vote of 21 in favour, with one against.

AGM16.5 Election of Trustees

Four trustees are elected annually for a three-year period. Retiring Trustees are eligible to apply for re-election. Only three nominations had been received this year so no vote was necessary. The elected Trustees were as follows:

Andrew Brown-Jackson
Nicholas Coombey
Ray Stockall.

AGM16.6 Update on Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)

As mentioned in the Chairman's Annual Report, the Association would not be changing its legal status but would be working with branches and members to ensure that the DSWA Rules and Branch Procedures were up to date and remained fit for purpose.

AGM16.7 Appointment of Independent Inspector/Auditor for the annual accounts

That Stables, Thompson & Briscoe, Chartered Accountants & Registered Auditors be thanked for their services and be re-appointed for 2016/2017 was proposed by M Booth and seconded by R Stockall. Unopposed, no vote necessary.

AGM16.8 Subscriptions

As noted on the agenda, there would be no increase in subscription rates for 2017 but a small increase would be implemented with effect from January 2018. All members would be notified in due course of the revised rates.

AGM16.9 Any Other Business

There was no other business as may be properly accepted at an Annual General Meeting. The formal meeting was therefore closed.

Branch of the Year Competition

Presentations were made for the Branch of the Year Competition as follows:

Small Branch

1st Dorset
2nd South East Scotland
3rd South West Scotland and South Yorkshire

Large Branch

1st Cheshire
2nd Central Scotland
3rd Cumbria and Otley & Yorkshire Dales

Pinnacle Award Presentation

The Chairman was pleased to announce that a Pinnacle Award had been granted to Lydia Noble and Adam Clarke for the design and construction of "The Hive", a privately commissioned dry stone shelter in West Yorkshire. Slate trophies and certificates were presented to Miss Noble and Mr Clarke. The owners of the property would also receive a trophy and certificate.

The Chairman was also able to announce that a Certificate of Merit had been awarded for the restoration of the Cross Fell summit shelter, in the north Pennines. The work had been carried out by Laurie Lambeth, assisted by Rob Brumfitt and Chris Goodier, trainees from the North Pennines AONB Heritage Skills programme. Unfortunately none of the recipients were able to attend but certificates would be sent to them.

Training and Education Coordinator Update

Unfortunately Mrs Clarkson had been unable to attend the weekend but there was a display of some of the project activity to date. A synopsis of the work was given by Richard Love, Chairman of the Craft Skills Group. As noted in the Chairman's address, the five Bursary Trainees had successfully gained the Level 1 Craftsman Certification Scheme qualification and were working towards the next test, scheduled in April. A warm welcome was extended to Tracy Cumberbatch, one of the Bursary Trainees, who was present at the meeting. Thanks were recorded to the Bursary Trainees placement providers; Messrs Gavins, Isherwood, Lambeth, Watson, and Hardman.

The mentoring scheme available to existing wallers who would like to progress their certification scheme qualifications has now got underway, with five people able to take advantage of this opportunity.

The Built Landscape Heritage Awareness Campaign would be one of the main areas of work during 2016. Branches in the north west area have identified events and activities appropriate for this aspect of the overall project although other events outwith these specific areas were also being considered.

It was pleasing to note that there had been an increase in the number of applications for the training vouchers, funded through The Prince's Countryside Fund, which were available towards the cost of a beginner training course and the Level 1 test fee to those meeting the scheme's eligibility criteria. This project was due to finish at the end of July 2016.

The meeting was appreciative of the huge amount of work that Mrs Clarkson had achieved within the last year.

Hundred Club

The first draw was made as follows:

March 2016

2% G Edington (71)
1% S Greenwood (116) and M Roberts (72)

Half Yearly

4% C Gordon-Clark (18)

Guest Speaker

The meeting was pleased to welcome Duncan Brown from Llen Natur, who gave an interesting, illustrated presentation into how postcards, and what has been written on them, can help identify changes that have taken place in an area in terms of landscape, climate and socio economic developments. Llen Natur is a web-based project, www.llennatur.com, with an emphasis on change through date and place.

Signed

Date