



Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting held on 27th June 2016

1. Welcome and Apologies

Present: Patrick Candler, David Newport, Derek Wileman, Julia Hodson, Pat Richards, Rachael Evans, Emma Garfoot.

Apologies: Rachel James, Jo Hunt, Fiona Goddard, Scott Goddard, Carol Gatford, Callum Mulligan, Pamela Young.

PC welcomed EG who has agreed to take on the role of Secretary.

2. Minutes of 9th May 2016

Minutes were discussed and agreed as an accurate record.

3. Matters Arising

Still no confirmation from Charles Watkins regarding the talk on the Japanese Gardens. PC to contact CW again.

DN to contact Graham Hardman (Chair of Japanese Society) about also doing a talk.

PC to follow up with ML about becoming a member.

DN mentioned Classic Car Show at Newstead Abbey.

4. Finance Matters

PC gave an update on the restructuring at WMF(UK). PC had had a conversation with John Darlington (JD) on the morning of 27th June regarding changes that had happened, including a staffing re-structure and to funding for a number of UK projects.

There are mixed outcomes. Funding for NAP is to be increased by £25,000 (subject to written confirmation from WMF).

However, the staffing changes have meant a number of redundancies, including Melissa Marshall and Eva Manias, both of whom have been very supportive of NAP. JD and Sarah Meaker remain in office at WMF. NAP members expressed their sadness at the changes and their sincerest thanks for all the help that WMF officers have given in the past.

JD's ambition is to complete the West Front Project ASAP (although no specific time frame has been given at present). Bill Lockheart (Chair of Trustees) would like to visit Newstead and meet with NAP. The WMF are looking at other funding options.

RE keen to ensure that discussions are three-way between NAP, WMF and NCC (Ron Inglis). RE mentioned the partnership with Historic England and raised concerns over the potential for different partnerships duplicating work. She suggested the focus needed to be on communication of the long-term vision for Newstead Abbey (next 10 years rather than next 12 months).

PC asked RE if NAP can be made aware of NCC's long-term plans for Newstead Abbey. RE is unable to provide a specific timeline at the moment, but can discuss general plans (below).

RE requested specific information regarding WMF plans for Newstead Abbey. We know that the West Front is the main area at risk and therefore of greatest concern to WMF.

DW ran through breakdown of latest Financial Statement, including membership. The accounts were accepted.

5. Officer and Committee Appointments

EG happy to take on role of Secretary.

Fiona and Scott Goddard have expressed interest in being on the Committee, although the timings of meetings has meant that they have been unable to attend.

6. West Front Project

This was discussed as part of the Finance update.

7. Membership Events/Activities

Symposium:

DN gave an update on the Symposium. DN's wife Christina is happy to attend to help out.

PC suggested inviting Councillor Trimble to the symposium.

RE to ask RJ to give talk on NCC's plans for Newstead Abbey.

DN expressed the need to keep speakers to time with allotted time slots to ensure the programme for the day runs smoothly.

DN to ensure 'Sherwood Trust' is changed to 'Sherwood Forest Trust' on the Symposium agenda.

Peter from Newstead Abbey Teaching Team is interested in Newstead Abbey during the Victorian period and has a photo album to share. Has discussed with DN the possibility of doing a talk another time (as not appropriate for this Symposium).

JH suggested promoting Newstead Abbey to local organisations as a venue for meeting etc. by including an element of this in the tour of the House, or in one of the presentations.

DN to sort name badges for the day, hopefully with NAP logo.

PC suggested sending a reminder to NAP members about Symposium, PC to draft reminder and EG to circulate by email. Estimated total number of attendees for Symposium = 25.

PC happy to bring laptop/projector/screen to save moving of equipment between rooms.

PC suggested farewell present for Melissa to be presented at Symposium.

NUGs:

DN provided an updated on grant progress. Arts Council England rejected initial grant bid, but NUGs would like to re-apply. They need time to re-work their bid, so are now working towards an event at Newstead Abbey on Easter weekend 2017, which will be a fete with games inspired by stories associated with the Abbey.

DN suggested pop-up events could be held in local towns during the run-up to Easter to help promote the main event.

DN also suggested working with Becky Cullen on a link to poetry, and will look into the possibility of some of Newstead Abbey's volunteers helping out at the event.

NAP had agreed to commit £1,500 to previous bid and all are in agreement that this amount should be carried forward to the new version. DN has had a conversation with NUGs about a 'plan B' in the event of other funding falling through and £1,500 being all they have to work with.

RE confirmed this idea will be welcomed by NCC, but advised to avoid 'Alice in Wonderland' theme as this has been unsuccessful in the past. Instead, RE suggested keeping in line with NCC's new strategic interpretation, which will focus on links to stories and characters of Newstead Abbey's past. This is to be a 5 year plan focussing on attracting more families to Newstead Abbey and increasing visitor numbers to the House itself. This will be done by introducing interpretation material into the House to complement the stories told by the guides (such as interpretation boards and panels, and digital technology to increase interactivity and make the stories more engaging for younger children).

An Interpretation Activity Panel has been set up to discuss an action plan for the new theme. Funding for the first year will come from income generated from the Abbey.

RE confirmed visitor numbers have now reached 100,000 p/a (yet only a small proportion of visitors actually enter the House, which is what this new approach hopes to change). RE also mentioned a potential new pricing structure for entry to Newstead Abbey.

8. Communications

CM was unable to make the meeting, so his progress with the marketing plan is not known. PC to follow up.

9. AGM

This will take place on Monday 5th September. 6pm was suggested as a start time, with a showing of The Darkness to begin the evening at 5.00pm. PC to draft and circulate a programme.

9. Charitable Status

DW provided an update and suggested NAP tries to fit in with one of the existing models of charity status to speed up the application process. DW agreed to look into this further.

10. Dates of Next Meetings

Monday 11th July - Symposium (11am)

Monday 8th August (2.30pm)

Monday 5th September - AGM (evening, exact time TBC)

11. AOB

It was suggested that NAP membership should be advertised more at events.

DN noted 'Byron-a-thon' as potential link to Poetry Day on 6th October 2016.

DN put forward the idea of a role swap with Nottingham Contemporary employees/volunteers who may be able to bring a contemporary approach to Newstead Abbey interpretation.