



**Minutes of the meeting of the DSWA Trustee Board meeting held  
on Saturday 5 December 2015 at Westmorland County Showground**

**Present:** R Stockall (Chairman), N Coombey, J Hanson, C Hardman, R Ingles, B Jones, A Loudon & R Love.

**ACTION BY**

**In Attendance:** Miss A Shaw

**Apologies:** Lord Cavendish, Mrs T Blackwell, M Booth, A Brown-Jackson, P Dolphin.

**TB15.52** **Chairman's Opening Remarks**

The Chairman welcomed people to the meeting and thanked everyone for travelling through adverse weather conditions.

**TB15.53** **To confirm minutes of previous Trustee Board meeting – 5 September 2015**

There were no queries or amendments. The minutes were therefore signed as a correct record of the meeting.

**TB15.54** **Matters Arising not Otherwise on the Agenda**

**TB15.54a** **Publicity Article:** This matter was being addressed by the Craft Skills Group.

**CRAFT SKILLS  
GROUP**

**TB15.54b** **Legacy for Durham area:** The paper submitted by the Northumbria branch had been previously circulated. Due to the bad weather a representative from the branch was unable to attend the meeting. However, copies of all correspondence relating to the legacy had been sent to the branch officers. With hindsight, it was acknowledged that the branch should have been advised directly of the legacy. It was reiterated that the branch would be an important contributor to discussions about the use of these funds and indeed had been asked to submit any ideas it may have to the office. The questions raised in the paper were answered as follows.

The legacy of £50,000 was received in October 2014 to be used for the building and repair of dry stone walling in the Durham area. There is no time limit against the use of the money, which was deposited into a bank account upon receipt. An acknowledgement of the legacy was included in the Winter 2014 issue of the Waller & Dyker and referenced at the AGM in March; there have been no meetings regarding the use of this money. The Association is keen to make the very best use of this substantial sum and Mrs Clarkson, as the Training & Education Coordinator for the DSWA, would be an appropriate person to work with the branch to develop a lasting project in the Durham area. The September Trustee Board minutes do make reference to a membership search for those living in the area specified in the legacy.

In conclusion it was agreed that progress needs to be made with this matter and a small working group would be established, consisting of a branch representative, Mrs Clarkson and Messrs Coombey and Hanson. A letter detailing the above would be sent to the branch.

**R STOCKALL**

**TB15.55** **Correspondence**

A letter had been received from Dean McLellan expressing his gratitude to the Association and its members for their support towards the Saugeen Amphitheatre Project and the dry stone festival held in Canada.

**ALL**

Correspondence from the Great North Air Ambulance Service recorded its thanks for the used postage stamps that have been sent by the DSWA over the years in support of its work.

**TB15.56** **Governance Issues**

Following the decision not to change the charitable status of the organisation, it was confirmed that amendments were now needed to the constitutions for both the national organisation and branches. The draft revisions prepared by B Jones and N Coombey and circulated ahead of the meeting were discussed. It was acknowledged that constitutional amendments should be ratified by members where practical, but this would not be possible at the 2016 AGM as paperwork had already been printed and any such amendments have to be approved by the Charity Commission in the first instance. However, it was agreed that the changes would be raised at the 2016 meeting and ratified at the 2017 AGM. The suggested amendments to the branch constitution, drawn up following advice from a charity law specialist, would be circulated to all branches for discussion and a meeting arranged after the New Year to discuss and agree changes.

**A SHAW/  
N COOMBEY/  
B JONES**

**TB15.57** **Financial Matters**

**TB15.57a** **Draft Accounts:** The draft year end accounts had been circulated ahead of the meeting and the comments raised by the Trustees returned to the accountants. Additional points were made as follows.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There should be a complete list of Trustees under the Trustees Expenses note, even if they chose not to claim any travel costs.</li> </ul>	A SHAW
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further clarification was sought in relation to the support costs, in particular to the Craftsman Certification Scheme. It was pointed out that these figures are representative of a percentage of the overall support costs for the Association.</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The one-year fixed deposit money had been transferred to the CAF account on maturity, pending suitable new investment opportunities being found.</li> </ul>	M BOOTH
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The CIO decision would be communicated to all members via the Waller &amp; Dyker and the Annual Report. The information would also be reported at the AGM although it was noted that the decision would be ratified at the AGM in 2017.</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It was suggested that the Hon Treasurer should include in his report at the AGM the fact that the deficit predicted as worst-case scenario had in fact not come to pass.</li> </ul>	M BOOTH
	<p>Subject to the above points being clarified with the accountants, the accounts were approved by the Trustees. The statement of financial accounts and balance sheet would be included in the Annual Report.</p>	A SHAW
TB15.57b	<p><b>Pensions:</b> The Association is registered with the Pension Regulator to receive regular updates in relation to pension requirements that are being rolled out. DSWA is required to have procedures in place by February 2017. A suitable scheme offered by NFU Mutual has been identified and staff would be contacted about the option to be enrolled or not. It was agreed that procedures should be finalised by December 2016 at the latest.</p>	M BOOTH
TB15.57c	<p><b>Branch Liabilities:</b> This item would be rolled forward to the next meeting in March.</p>	M BOOTH
TB15.58	<p><b><u>Membership</u></b></p>	
TB15.58a	<p><b>Current Membership Figures:</b> The current membership figures were given as follows. A total of 1084 members, including 808 Open, 240 Professional, 18 Corporate and 12 Junior/Full-time students. It was noted that members could now join/renew on-line via the website using a two stage secure process. Thanks were recorded to Miss Shaw for sorting this out in conjunction with the website hosts.</p>	
TB15.58b	<p><b>Membership Costs:</b> Following the request at the last meeting, rough membership costs had been produced and would be circulated with the minutes for information.</p>	A SHAW
TB15.59	<p><b><u>Craft Skills Group</u></b></p>	
TB15.59a	<p><b>Report from Meeting:</b> The latest meeting of the Craft Skills Group took place on 17 November and minutes would be circulated with the Trustee Board minutes. A brief summary of the meeting was given and the following points noted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work had been carried out on the training site in terms of tidying up and rebuilding some of the walls. It was envisaged that further work would be undertaken next year and that the site could be better promoted and used nationally by developing standard guidelines and a pricing structure.</li> <li>• Test days for this year have now finished. Overall there has been a high level of success during the year although it was disappointing to note that a number of branch test days had been cancelled. Consideration might be given to offering additional test days at Crooklands to accommodate people but not at the expense of branch test days.</li> <li>• A lively discussion had taken place about the possibility of offering alternative test opportunities for those not able to complete the tests within the given timescale but there were concerns that this could lead to a “watering down” of the scheme which was not appropriate. There had been some feedback to the Waller &amp; Dyker following the article by C Stephens and perhaps the Association needs to look at recognising people’s achievements in some other way. This issue is perhaps more relevant if people are wishing to be considered as DSWA Instructors, who have to hold the Level2/Intermediate qualification.</li> </ul>	A SHAW
TB15.59b	<p><b>Understanding Dry Stone Walling:</b> Additional comments had been submitted to N Coombey and a revised document produced. It was suggested that the document should focus on three main areas of work: specifications for a wall, skill of the waller and monitoring of quality. The Association already has a wealth of information available which is widely used but it is not in the same format as that required for specifications of walls. Drafts had been submitted to, discussed and accepted by the Craft Skills Group. It was further suggested that it might be useful to include drawings or photos of regional variations – some of which already exist in the Millennium Wall booklet and the Walls and the Landscape leaflet. Final amendments would be made to the document which would then be available on the DSWA website.</p>	A LOUDON/ N COOMBAY/ A SHAW
TB15.59c	<p><b>Aberdeen Western Peripheral Bypass:</b> Concerns had been raised about the quality of the dry stone walling work being carried out as part of this project. Further photos of the poor standard of work had been received and subsequently a letter has been sent to Transport Scotland, and others, expressing those concerns. Thanks were recorded to A Loudon for dealing with this matter.</p>	

**TB15.59d** **Training Standards:** J Hanson raised the issue of the technical quality of training provided to groups and within branches and whether a process similar to that used for Examiners could help maintain and monitor the quality of the training. It was noted that some changes were being considered along the lines of the procedures for Examiners which would be addressed through the Craft Skills Group and the Instructor Training Course. R Ingles advised that the Cotswold Branch and the AONB were planning an informal one-day refresher course for instructors in that area to ensure there was a consistent delivery of courses. Feedback forms were issued by most branches to course participants.

**TB15.60** **Training & Education Update**  
A detailed report had been produced and circulated prior to the meeting. The meeting was pleased to learn that all the bursary trainees had been successful in gaining the Level 1 qualification and the six monthly appraisal visits had been completed. Thanks were recorded to Mrs Clarkson for the huge amount of work she was undertaking.

**TB15.61** **Coordinator Reports**

**TB15.61a** **Grants:** Revised GAEC rules are now available for England and the new Leader programmes are now available for England, Wales and Scotland. It was noted that priorities for this funding do vary from region to region.

**TB15.61b** **International:** The Japanese wallers had undertaken another successful visit to Cumbria in October with fourteen participants gaining qualifications at Levels 1, 2 or 3.

**TB15.61c** **Pinnacle Awards:** Plans were in hand for an inspection of the latest project that had been submitted. A report would be given to the next meeting.

**TB15.61d** **Ronnie Ball Awards:** Nothing to report.

**TB15.62** **Working Party Reports**

No reports available.

**TB15.63** **DSWA Brand**

The paper originally produced for the September 2014 meeting had been reissued and a project submission form had been available at the September 2015 meeting. C Hardman advised that there was general support for the creation of a standard website home page for branches. It should be noted that there were some queries/concerns about the costs involved. The project also included the making of a short promotional film, estimated costs of approximately £8,000. Derbyshire Branch already had funding of around £10,000 donated for this purpose. The website work was expected to cost in the region of £5,000 although exact figures were not available. There was a request that DSWA make available the balance of £3,000 in order to progress work on the website pages. The project was agreed in principle, subject to further information being made available in terms of the tendering process, what was involved and any ongoing costs in maintaining branch pages. It would be important to ensure all branches were able to update pages and training should be made available if necessary. Any updates should also be compatible with the DSWA website. The Trustee Board must be kept informed of developments and have sight of any draft material that is produced.

C HARDMAN

Eligible To vote	For	Against	Abstain
8	8		
<b>Proposer</b>	C Hardman	<b>Seconder</b>	A Loudon

**TB15.63a** **Merchandising:** It was acknowledged that this should be addressed as part of the previous item, DSWA Brand. A suggestion was made that a car sticker could perhaps be developed as part of the membership pack.

**TB15.64** **DSWA Members' Weekend and AGM**

Booking details would be included in the winter issue of the Waller & Dyker due out shortly. Note the change of date to 12-13 March 2016. The event will be based at the Celtic Royal Hotel in Caernarfon.

**TB15.65** **Branch Updates**

Brief round table updates were given and included the following points. It was agreed that in future this item should be at the start of each meeting.

A SHAW

- In light of the cancellation of the walling competition in the Cotswolds, the branch was considering the possibility of developing an alternative type of competition, possibly for the "best wall built within the year". The Country Land and Business Association (CLA) in Yorkshire already runs something similar, which may be of help.
- Skye branch had experienced some problems in recent months but training in conjunction with the West Highland College was planned for 2016, following on from the successful course in 2015.
- Cumbria branch was keen to see the costs involved in the proposed website project.
- The Scotland Liaison Group meeting had taken place in October, offering the Scottish branches the opportunity to discuss joint plans and projects, which continued to be a very useful process.

- A number of branches had made generous transfers of funds to the national office, either for general use or specific projects, all of which were gratefully received.

Trustees were reminded to make regular contact with the branches for which they have a responsibility and to ensure branches know there is an open invitation for a representative to attend Trustee Board meetings.

ALL

**TB15.65a** **Appointment of a Branches' Representative:** This idea was put forward as a possible way of branches being involved in the decision making process but not intended to replicate the historic practice of each branch having a representative on the Trustee Board. It was suggested that the above invitation for branches to attend meetings if they wished might be sufficient.

**TB15.66** **Any Other Business**

**TB15.66a** **Photocopier:** Comparative costs would be obtained for the next meeting.

A SHAW

**TB15.66b** **Archive Project:** Nothing to report.

B JONES

**TB15.66c** **DSWA Calendar:** Copies were still available from the office. It was suggested that it might not be appropriate for professional wallers to be promoting their work directly through the images used.

**TB15.66d** **DSWA Carrier Bags:** A suggestion had been made by South Yorkshire branch for the Association to look at using paper bags instead of the current plastic ones. It was, however, pointed out that if the weather was poor the plastic bag would still keep contents dry. If and when new supplies were needed care would be taken to ensure the bags were made from environmentally friendly materials but there were no plans to change to paper versions.

A SHAW

**TB15.66e** **Heritage Crafts Association:** A suggestion had been made that the DSWA should join this organisation, which acts as an advocacy body for traditional heritage crafts. It was noted that the Association does receive regular updates from HCA and contributes to queries, etc. In addition, Miss Shaw is an individual member. No further action would be taken at the present time.

**TB15.66f** **Good Life Experience:** This was being followed up by Mrs Clarkson as previously agreed by the Trustees.

I CLARKSON

**TB15.66g** **DSWA 5-year Plan:** Nothing to report.

M BOOTH

**TB15.66h** **DSWA Branch Reference File:** Ongoing.

R STOCKALL

**TB15.66i** **Office Closure for Christmas:** The office will close for the Christmas holidays at the end of the day on Tuesday 22 December and will reopen on Monday 4 January 2016.

**TB15.67** **Hundred Club**

Subsequent to the formal meeting, draws were made as follows:

October	2% J Grant (29)	1% J Shaw (56) and J Gittins (46)
November	2% W Buchan (77)	1% C Hodges (118) and M Johnson (83)
December	2% P Davies (37)	1% A Hill (132) and J Grant (28)
January	2% L Clarkson (50)	1% M Johnson (85) and V Hollings (18)
February	2% W Buchan (76)	1% D Bradley (10) and L Kelly (40)
Half Year	4% J Gittins (45)	

A SHAW

**TB15.67a** **Continuation of the Hundred Club for 2016:** There was a unanimous agreement to continue with the Hundred Club in 2016.

**TB15.68** **Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting will take place on **Sunday 13 March 2016** at the Celtic Royal Hotel, Caernarfon.

Agenda items and papers should be sent to the office by Friday 5 February 2016 at the latest for full circulation.

Signed .....Ray Stockall.....

Date .....13 March 2016.....