



2023 AGM

8th January 2024, 7-9pm

Workhouse Museum Dining Room

Minutes

Present: Alexa Vernon (AV), David Thelwall (DT), Richard Taylor (RT), Mandy Whitehead (MWh), Robert Ling (RL), Caroline Lewis-Jones (CL-J), Rebecca Crallan (RC), Richard Pollitt (RP), Laura Allan (LA), Ferdinand von Holstein (FVH), Sonja Nowicki (SN), Andy Bates (AB), Freya Cox (FC), Sophie Harrison (SH), Katy O'Malley (KOM), John Roberts, Ken Dixon, Harry Fairburn, Marion Morris, Lindy Webb, Judy Jones, Alan Cox, Roger Trees, Nicola Bradbury, Alison Brayshaw, Wayne Hassan, Heather Law

Apologies: Martin Webber (MWe), Amy Stow (AS), Paul Grayson (PG), Catherine Baxter (CB)

1. Welcome and Apologies

As above

2. Minutes of the AGM, held on 4th October 2022

Agreed that these were a true record.

Proposed by Lindy Webb, Seconded by DT.

3. Chairman's Report

Richard began his presentation by explaining that this would be his last in the role of Chair. it would not be his usual review of the year - he would leave that to others - but would instead be a look at some of the more memorable events of his time over nearly 30 years.

His main message was, to paraphrase Bill Clinton, that "It's the people, stupid!". Those people were exclusively volunteers when the Trust was set up but now the organisation has matured to include both staff and volunteers. He felt our biggest successes have come when we have been able to work together in teams of knowledgeable enthusiasts to deliver what no one person could do on their own. The Trust has been fortunate to have attracted people of real talent whose leadership has inspired us all to go further than we ever thought possible. Richard singled out three who have inspired him the most with their vision - Dr John Whitehead, Anthony Chadwick, and Bess Chapman - who between them established the three museums. They also showed what could be achieved to get things moving on persuasion, limited resources, and hard work. That spirit was taken up by volunteers (later staff) - Christine Orsler and Penny Hartley - who again achieved so much on a shoestring.

The breakthrough came with the arrival of the Heritage Lottery Fund which brought more substantial funding but still with a significant volunteer input. Opportunities were seized to supplement HLF money with other grants, notably the Workhouse Garden Project ably steered by Mandy Whitehead. Richard complimented David Thelwall on his 'can do' philosophy which notably produced (against all expectations!) a fundraising event for major national charities at the Garrick Club in London hosted by Michael Abrahams and Richard Compton.

Richard reminded us that working at the museums has brought a lot of fun too from the time when the BBC came to film for Restoration, the re-enacted trial of Eugene Aram with the late Brian Kealy and the Richard III event with Philippa Langley which raised over £1000.

More recently he noted that we have celebrated some who have passed through the doors of the Workhouse including the centenarian, Bella Lofthouse. The lives of previous occupants were vividly brought to life in a home-grown drama done as our contribution to the Ripon Theatre Festival. Richard hoped that we can build on this success with future productions involving the wider community.

He concluded with memories of perhaps the most bizarre of all the events which was the filming some years ago by Russian Channel 1 TV of our Mugshots Exhibition. Richard had been sent a copy of the film which had gone out on Russian TV and was able to share it with the meeting. This was a sad reminder though that such cooperation would not be possible in today's more troubled world. Richard's closing thought was that the museums were on the cusp of what could be our biggest scheme yet - the Fairer Futures Project - but all was dependent on the continued support of the Heritage Fund. He hoped to be part of the team which would realise that project and looked forward to many more years of volunteering with the Trust. He thanked all those who have been such a pleasure to work with and who have produced museums of real and lasting value of which we can all be proud.

4. Director's Update

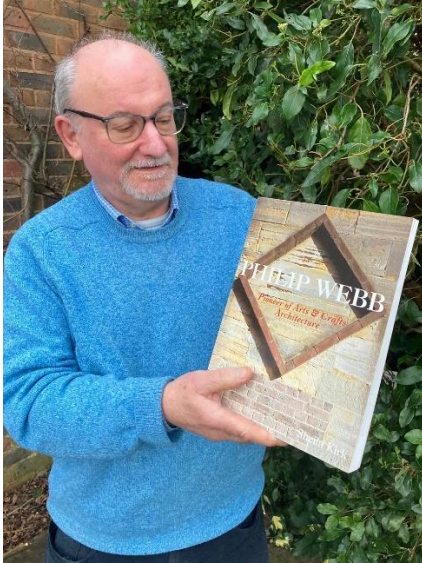
See report attached.

The Trust has been delivering Arts Council Work this year – this has been important due to getting grant from Arts Council. This is what the Creative Conversations exhibition has come from.

5. Treasurer's Report

See presentation attached.

DT gave thanks to RT and MWh for their hard work whilst being Chair and Vice Chair of the Board. RT was presented with a book by Philip Webb 'Pioneer of Arts and Craft Architecture'.



6. Appointment of Independent Financial Examiners

To approve the continued engagement of HPH Chartered Accountants of Harrogate.

Auditors were proposed by DT and Seconded by Lindy Webb.

7. Election of Board

RL and CL-J are in position to become Chair and Vice-Chair with RT and MWh standing down from these roles but staying on as co-opted members of the Board.

Steven Revell has stood down as has AV on taking her new position as Museum Director.

MWe is offering to stand again and had been proposed and seconded. RP and RC were co-opted until this AGM and had offered themselves for election. All had duly been proposed and seconded.

RT suggested that as there were no further nominations to fill the vacancies that the meeting be asked to approve them en bloc. This was seconded by DT and voted in unanimously by members present.

RT thanked MWh for her time as Vice-Chair and wished RL and CL-J success in their new roles. RL responded by thanking them both.

8. Current Constitution

The Constitution was agreed at the last AGM. All the amendments from the last meeting have been implemented and the new Constitution can be found on the website [here](#).

9. Any Other Business

None

10. Short Break

11. Reflections and Resolutions – AV

See report attached.

In the National Lottery funded project there will be a new visitor route. This will have different route choices depending on what experience you are wanting to get out of the visit. There will not be enough money to spend developing all three sites with National Lottery Fund but there will be a trail to encompass all three of the sites,

We will look at having a caterer in the grounds of the museum as this came up a lot during research – people wanted somewhere to buy a drink.

A lot of attractions have noticed a 30% down in their admissions since Covid, whereas, we have almost got back to pre-Covid levels.

We are wanting to focus on family audiences this year with lots of repeat local family visits.