



English
Folk
DANCE & SONG SOCIETY

Board Matters

Number 40. Our update for members about the activities of the Board and governance of the English Folk Dance and Song Society. Issued with EDS magazine, **Spring 2020**.

From the Chair

Happy New Decade! I hope the year has started well for you, and for all of your folk activities.

If you are one of our many members whose renewal became due in January, thank you for being with us for another year. Your membership fees provide the essential stability which allows us to plan our regular activities, including:

- ✧ Presenting an increasing number of workshops to young people, introducing new generations to folk dance and music
- ✧ Supporting professional folk artists at all stages in their careers through creative bursaries and residencies
- ✧ Developing new youth activities and initiatives, including youth dance projects and *Folk Unlimited* for young people with disabilities
- ✧ Encouraging research and academic learning through conferences and lectures, supported by ever-expanding online resources from the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library

I give particular thanks to those of you – and you are many – who choose to add an extra donation on top of your basic membership. As we are able to claim Gift Aid on these donations, at no cost

to you they can become worth an additional 25% to the charity – the only requirement is that you have paid tax on your income (which can come from earnings, pension or investments) covering the value of your donation.

Legacies provide further invaluable funds. For example, in 2014 generous legacies from the late Rita Smyth and Jennifer Millett enabled us to support and develop English social folk dance by recruiting our first ever Dance Development Manager. But this particular support is now coming to an end, and we are seeking further funds to continue this important work.

There is plenty of evidence that all of these donations are used to maximum effect! Over the past three years, nearly 100,000 people took part in our workshops, lectures, courses and conferences, or attended our gigs at Cecil Sharp House and around England. A further 600,000 have used our online resources, and we have supported the work of 800 professional artists. I emphasise again that all of this could not happen without your support.

Sam Partridge, Artistic Director of the National Youth Folk Ensemble, will again

be leading a series of free Sampler Days throughout the country over the May half-term week. These days aren't just for young instrumentalists who hope to join the National Youth Folk Ensemble – they're open to young person who plays confidently and wants to take part in an inspiring day of music making.

The Sampler Days are open to all instrumentalists aged 12–18, and are completely free. If you know a young person who might be interested in joining the National Youth Folk Ensemble, they will need to attend one of these days to start the audition process. Sampler days will take place this year in Chesterfield, Gateshead, York, Milton Keynes, Preston, Saffron Walden, Bradford on Avon and Ashford. For details and to book a free place, see efdss.org/youthfolk

As ever, thank you all for the incredible support you give us – and thanks to our wonderful teams who enable us to deliver so many activities throughout the country.

Lorna Aizlewood
Chair

Board meeting 9 November 2019

The Board meeting took place immediately following the AGM. Some of the decisions were reported in the Winter 2019 edition of Board Matters.

Apologies were received from Alistair Anderson, Alan Davey, Fi Fraser and Laura Jones. The remainder of the Board was present together with the Chief Executive and the Company Secretary.

Lorna Aizlewood took the chair and welcomed the newly elected Board members. Lorna Aizlewood was unanimously re-elected as the Chair of the Board and Alan Davey was unanimously re-elected as the Vice-Chair of the Board. Ed Fishwick was unanimously elected as Hon Treasurer.

Lorna Aizlewood, Sherry Neyhus and Ed Fishwick were appointed as Board members on the General Purposes Committee (GPC). They will be joined on the GPC by non-board members Mike Heaney and Mike Wilson-Jones

together with the Chief Executive and Finance Director. The Board did not delegate any powers to the GPC.

Sherry Neyhus presented the GPC/Board Financial Report for the six months to 30 September 2019. The question of Public Liability Insurance was discussed. There is now an agreement that all members will be covered from 2020 onwards with the only stipulations being that they are undertaking folk activities and that those activities involve no more than 500 people. The open-market value of the benefits will now exceed 25% of the subscription, so under HMRC regulations, Gift Aid will no longer be claimable on membership subscriptions.

The Chief Executive had previously circulated her report and had no amendments or additions to make. The Board discussed the EFDSS's performance delivery against Arts Council England requirements including delivery of the Creative Case for Diversity.

The Chair received a comment from a member regarding the apparently disproportionate increase on individual membership from 2019 to 2020. This is due to rounding to the nearest pound and the point will be considered at the next subscription rate revision.

The Chair expressed the thanks of herself and the Board to retiring Board Members Mick Gallagher and Mike Heaney for their work during their time on the Board.

Following the change in the Articles at the AGM to allow electronic decision making, it was agreed that where a proposal has been circulated round the Board by the Company Secretary, it shall be taken as agreed when a majority of the Board have signified agreement.

The next Board meeting will be on Saturday 14 March 2020.

Gold Badge Nominations

Each year the English Folk Dance and Song Society considers whether – and, if so, to whom – Gold Badges should be awarded.

The Gold Badge is awarded to those who have made unique or outstanding contributions to the art or science of folk dance, music or song, and/or those who have given exceptional support in furthering the aims of the Society.

Nominations can be made at any time but are normally considered in the spring, with new awards announced in the autumn.

If you would like to nominate someone for an award, please do so before the closing date for nominations for this year, which is 1 April 2020.

Details of the awards and how to make nominations can be found at efdss.org/gold-badges