

Board Matters

Number 46. Our update for members about the activities of the Board and governance of the English Folk Dance and Song Society. Issued with EDS magazine, Autumn 2021.

From the Chair

I write this in early August, as the week's events are coming to a close at Sidmouth including our own presentations every afternoon at Blackmore Gardens of up-and-coming musicians and recent bursary recipients. No doubt many readers will have been at one of the festivals which have been able to present programmes of events, including our own National Youth Folk Ensemble's first live performance since early 2020 at Purbeck Valley Folk Festival. Almost everybody's plans have had to be scaled back, but despite that there is much to be thankful for.

These are exciting times for the English Folk Dance and Song Society, as some plans hatched over the past 18 months are beginning to bear fruit. In this edition of Board Matters you can read about our new members-only area of the website, along with our plans to crowd-source a comprehensive new online calendar for social folk dancing. We thank everyone who has contributed to our plans so far, and are particularly grateful for the support of the dedicated people who have previously developed Set and Turn Single. We have also been collecting

opinions about a possible change of name for the organisation as a whole – you can read more inside, and we hope that many members will want to engage constructively in this process. We will be sharing analysis of the surveys and discussions so far, which we encourage you to read with an open mind.

As is customary at this time of year, we are pleased to announce the latest additions to our exclusive 'club' of Gold Badge recipients. Congratulations to the singer, musician and dancer **Rod Stradling**; dance artist and diversity champion **Kerry Fletcher**; clog dancer and teacher **Lynette Eldon** together with her husband, fiddle player and champion of fishermen's songs **Jim Eldon**; and **Chris Metherell**, morris dancer and archivist. We'll be announcing our Alan James Bursaries shortly, in support of artists who are exploring new creative ideas inspired by and sourced from traditional English folk music.

I was also heartened to see that folk activities have recently been celebrated in two announcements of national

significance. No fewer than three folk musicians – our past President Shirley Collins, Rowan Rheingans and Aidan O'Rourke – were recognised in the Paul Hamlyn Foundation's latest philanthropic awards to twenty 'influential and inspirational' creative composers working in any genre. And Cat McGill – organiser of Folk Weekend Oxford, singer, fiddle player and ceilidh caller – was awarded a British Empire Medal in the Birthday Honours for Services to the Arts.

Finally, I am delighted to announce that our current Vice-President, the wonderful Eliza Carthy, has accepted the role as President-Elect (subject to confirmation at this year's AGM this autumn) replacing the esteemed Shirley Collins who stood down last year. I'm sure you'll all join me in thanking Eliza for taking on this role - and watch this space for more news on both the role of President going forwards and our new plans to introduce Patrons to the organisation in the future.

Lorna Aizlewood Chair

Annual General Meeting: Agenda and Notes

The AGM of The English Folk Dance and Song Society will take place on 13 November 2021 commencing at 11am at Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regent's Park Road, London, NW1 7AY.

It is hoped that the AGM will take place in person this year, but the pandemic continues and it is possible that arrangements will have to be changed. Any changes will be announced on the website.

Please note the **Instructions for Proxy Voting**.

1. Welcome

2. Apologies for absence

3. Adoption of the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 14 November 2020

4. Matters arising from the Minutes (not elsewhere on this agenda)

5. Presentation of the Annual Report and Accounts, including the report of the Auditors, and an update on activities April to November 2021. The Chair, Chief Executive and Honorary Treasurer will each address the meeting and then questions will be taken on the Annual Report and Accounts and the updated information provided.

6. Elections to the Board [see Note 1]

7. Ordinary Resolution 1 (Proposed by the Board) [See Note 2]: To set subscription rates for 2022

8. Ordinary Resolution 2 (Proposed by the Board): To re-appoint Sayer Vincent as EFDSS Auditors until the conclusion of the 2022 AGM and to authorize the Board to agree their remuneration

9. Ordinary Resolution 3 (Proposed by the Board) [see note 3]: To appoint Eliza Carthy as President for a three year term commencing at this AGM

10. Ordinary Resolution 4 (Proposed by the Board) [See Note 4]: To confirm the appointment of Martin Parker as a member of the Board under Article 11.5

11. Special Resolution 1 (Proposed by the Board) [See note 5]

To add a new clause to the Society's Articles of Association as follows:

"8.3 (1) A person is able to exercise the right to speak at a general meeting when that person is in a position to communicate to all those attending the meeting, during the meeting, any information or opinions which that person has on the business of the meeting.

(2) A person is able to exercise the right to vote at a general meeting when —

(a) that person is able to vote, during the meeting, on resolutions put to the vote at the meeting, and (b) that person's vote can be taken into account in determining whether or not such resolutions are passed at the same time as the votes of all the other persons attending the meeting.

(3) The directors may make whatever arrangements they consider appropriate to enable those attending a general meeting to exercise their rights to speak or vote at it.

(4) In determining attendance at a general meeting, it is immaterial whether any two or more members attending it are in the same place as each other.

(5) Two or more persons who are not in the same place as each other attend a general meeting if their circumstances are such that if they have (or were to have) rights to speak and vote at that meeting, they are (or would be) able to exercise them."

and renumber the remaining clauses in Article 8 as necessary.

12. Any Other Business

Note 1. The number of candidates for election to the Board does not exceed the number of vacancies, so all candidates proposed are automatically elected. At the time of going to press full details of those elected are not available. The will be shown on the website as soon as possible.

Note 2. The recommended subscription levels for 2022 are as follows.

(2021 rates in brackets)
Standard £55 (£53)
Senior £37 (£36)
Student £25 (£24)
Younger Generation £25 (£24)
Joint Standard £82 (£80)
Joint Senior £55 (£53)
Single Life Member £492 (£478)
Joint Life Member £698 (£678)

Fees for Affiliates are set by the Board and do not need the approval of the AGM.

For 2022 they are as follows.

(2021 rates in brackets)

School £30 (£28)

UK Institution £97 (£94)

Overseas Institution £118 (£115)

Affiliate Club £84 (£81)

Folk Development Agency £84 (£81)

Note 3. Eliza Carthy has served as the EFDSS Vice-President for a number of years. Following Shirley Collins standing down as President, the Board have invited her to become the EFDSS President. She has accepted the invitation. Under our Articles the appointment requires the approval of a General Meeting.

Note 4. Martin Parker has been involved in folk music since he was a teenager, and so is very excited to be a part of the Board of Trustees for EFDSS. His first experience of traditional culture was the Leeds-based youth group Roots Alive, and since then he has worked on various projects. These include the first two cohorts of the National Youth Folk Ensemble, and more recently ceilidh bands and couple of fusion projects. He has just finished studying Maths at Oxford University, and plans to spend the next few years working on new projects sharing the folk arts with people that have not experienced them before, through teaching and organising events.

Note 5. This will allow general meetings to have members attending by remote links (Zoom etc). The text is taken from the Model Articles prescribed by the Government for companies limited by guarantee and would now be the default position for a newly registered company. The need for this became apparent at the 2020 AGM when we were faced with holding the meeting physically during the covid crisis because there was nothing in our Articles to allow for an electronic meeting. (Last year the Government brought in emergency legislation which allowed us to hold an electronic meeting but the provisions of that Act have now expired.) Electronic attendance would also allow members living away from the area where the meeting is being held to participate more easily.

Board meeting June 2021

The Board met by Zoom on 6 June 2021.

As is usual at the June meeting senior members of staff joined the first part of the meeting to speak to the Board about their areas of responsibility and to update them on progress.

The Chair updated the Board about progress in appointing a new President for EFDSS and also on the progress of inviting new Trustees to fill skills gaps and to continue to increase the diversity of the Board.

The Chief Executive presented the draft business plan for 2022–23. This will need to be submitted in September to Arts Council England to secure funding for 2022–23, an extension year of funding

that ACE is offering to all National Portfolio Organisations in recognition of the difficulties brought by Covid-19.

The Education Director presented the updated Safeguarding policy which is now available on the EFDSS website.

The Board discussed the concept of a new name and agreed that this proposal would be presented to the membership via the September EDS.

The Board examined the management accounts to the end of March 2021 which are satisfactory, subject to audit. It is too early to draw any conclusions about the current financial year, but the figures appear on track.

The Chief Executive presented her report. Now that Covid restrictions are being relaxed, some education and performance events have taken place in Cecil Sharp House, including the live streaming of the concert by Peggy Seeger and Calum MacColl.

The Risk Assessment for EFDSS has had its annual review and the Board considered the report of the Gold Badge panel and approved their recommendations.

2021 AGM Proxy Voting

Deadline for voting online or by post is 23:59 on Tuesday 9 November 2021.

You may vote by proxy and may appoint your proxy either by letter or by email.

To appoint your proxy by post, send the form overleaf to AGM 2021, EFDSS, Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regent's Park Road, London, NW1 7AY. (A letter containing the same information as on the form is also acceptable.)

To appoint your proxy by e-mail, send the form overleaf as an attachment to an email to agm@efdss.org. (An email containing the same information as on the form in the body of the e-mail is also acceptable.)

Joint members should have received two copies of this form.

Please read these notes before appointing your Proxy and casting your Votes.

1. We recommend that you appoint the Chair of the Meeting as your representative to attend and vote at the Annual General Meeting, or at any adjournment of the meeting.
2. Your appointed representative *must be present* at the meeting for your vote to be counted. Check their attendance as you will lose your vote if they do not attend.
3. You must tell us the name of your proxy (appointed representative) before the deadline or you will lose your vote.
4. If you select "Discretionary" or fail to select any of the given options your proxy can vote or not as he/she chooses. The Chair of the meeting will use any discretionary votes to support the resolutions.

The Board recommends that you vote in favour of all resolutions.

See overleaf >

2021 AGM Proxy Voting

You must complete section A, and you must sign and date at the bottom of the page.

Please complete **either section B or section C** for your voting instructions to be valid. Most members nominate the Chair of the Meeting as their representative: this would require the completion of section B.

A. Your name
Your membership number

B. Appointment of Chair as my representative

I appoint the Chair of the meeting as my representative to attend and vote at the 2021 AGM and any adjournment of the meeting.

C. Appointment of someone else as my representative

I appoint the person named here as my representative to attend and vote at the 2021 AGM and any adjournment of the meeting.

My representative's name:
 My representative's address:

Signed:

Dated:

Voting Instructions

	<i>For</i>	<i>Against</i>	<i>Discretionary</i>	<i>Vote Withheld</i>
Ordinary Resolution 1 (To set subscription rates)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ordinary Resolution 2 (To re-appoint Sayer Vincent as auditors)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ordinary Resolution 3 (To appoint Eliza Carthy as EFDSS President)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ordinary Resolution 4 (To confirm Martin Parker's appointment to the Board)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Special Resolution 1 (To make an addition to the Articles of Association)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>