

Board Matters

Number 45. Our update for members about the activities of the Board and governance of the English Folk Dance and Song Society. Issued with EDS magazine, **Summer 2021**.

From the Chair

I am writing this on 17 May, the day when Covid regulations have been relaxed in some big ways. It's great to see in-person activity returning, including live gigs at Cecil Sharp House.

But the return of what used to be known as 'everyday life' is far from simple – everyone who organises folk activities is sure to have many questions. The situation continues to change regularly. We are working with a range of support organisations across dance and music to clarify exactly what we are allowed to do, and how we can stay safe while doing it. We have collected together useful sources of expert guidance and information for both amateurs and professional practitioners. See efdss.org/covid-advice for the latest updates.

EFDSS' digital output has been exceptional since Covid changed the world. I would like to congratulate the team for everything that they have delivered over the past year, including:

- ✳️ New multi-media materials in our Resource Bank (including around 50 new videos) have encouraged engagement and enlightenment
- ✳️ Youth Folk Sampler Days in May/June 2020 moved online, and reached a record number of participants
- ✳️ Library Lectures on Zoom have reached substantial audiences around the world, and selected past lectures

are available on our YouTube channel: youtube.com/user/CecilSharp1

- ✳️ The National Youth Folk Ensemble's residential weeks moved online; smaller groups were able to meet in real life in April, and we hope that they may be able to meet as a whole ensemble again this summer
- ✳️ Katy Spicer's *Folk Folk* discussions have explored some of the biggest issues within England's rich cultural landscape
- ✳️ Folk Education Network events on Zoom have attracted record participation – and the Network itself has grown by around a third, to 420 members and counting
- ✳️ Regular classes and courses have moved online wherever possible, with the tutors of Saturday Folk Music Workshops, Cecil Sharp House Choir, Monday Folk Choir Workshops, Folk Unlimited and London Youth Folk Ensemble expertly adapting and developing their teaching for the virtual environment
- ✳️ Steve Roud's *Folk Song in England* sessions have reached a large and engaged international audience
- ✳️ We have instigated and worked with partner organisations on campaigns supporting a wide range of interests within the folk community
- ✳️ Our creative bursary programme for folk artists has been able to continue, along with our popular Artists'

Development Newsletter and a new Micro Grants programme

- ✳️ The Library's 2020 Conference and Broadside Day both reached substantial online audiences, and we are planning to retain a virtual element within this year's conference
- ✳️ The *Classic Folk* radio show, presented by former Chair Mike Norris, has continued to appear weekly
- ✳️ A members' area of the website will be launching shortly
- ✳️ We have used our social media channels to represent the interests of all who are connected to folk music and dance, and to encourage essential discussions about their relevance to everyone who lives in England today

Adapting so many of our activities so that they can take place effectively online, and creating a host of new virtual projects, has enabled us to increase our reach throughout England and beyond. With the imminent installation of streaming equipment at Cecil Sharp House, we plan to bring our work to even bigger and more diverse audiences.

Your membership fees, and any additional donations you are able to make, provide crucial support for all of our activities. Thank you!

Lorna Aizlewood Chair

Annual General Meeting 2021

The Annual General meeting will be held at 11am on Saturday 13 November 2021.

It is intended that the meeting will be at Cecil Sharp House, but this may not be possible due to the pandemic. Any changes will be announced in Board Matters and on the website.

Any nominations for election to the Board or motions to be proposed at the meeting should be sent to the Secretary by email at secretary@efdss.org or by post to Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regent's Park Road, London NW1 7AY.

Board Meeting, March 2021

The EFDSS Board held a Zoom meeting on 20 March. The whole Board, together with the Chief Executive and the Company Secretary, were present.

It was confirmed that EFDSS has received a grant from the Weston Culture Fund to support recovery post-pandemic. This will enable investment in technical equipment for streaming, and artist support.

The Treasurer introduced the financial report. A small surplus is expected, which is much better than feared at the beginning of the lockdowns. EFDSS has been able to claim under the furlough scheme and there was a grant from the National Lottery, and a successful crisis fundraising scheme. The Board thanked the Chief Executive and her staff for how they had coped with the problems of the last year.

The Treasurer introduced the 2021–2 budget. The proposed budget is based on the assumption that covid restrictions will be eased from May, and that earned income (eg hires and ticket sales) will gradually build to post-pandemic levels through the year; overall, a lower level of income is expected. Following detailed discussion the budget was approved.

It was agreed that EFDSS should celebrate the level of digital activities that have taken place since Covid restrictions were imposed in March 2020. The Chair is to summarize these activities in her next report to members [please see the reverse of this sheet].

A new chair of the Gold Badge Panel has been appointed. The chair of the panel will report to the next Board meeting with proposals for developing the Gold Badge awards. The names of the members of the panel are not published.

The Board noted the report from the Chief Executive on activities and developments that are increasing equality, diversity and inclusion at EFDSS. This is a standard item on the agenda.

The Secretary confirmed that all the necessary reports have been filed at Companies House and with the Charity Commission.

The next meeting will be on Tuesday 8 June.

Choose to receive Folk Music Journal by post

A reminder for Individual, Joint and Group members: Folk Music Journal will soon be available online, with the option to continue receiving it by post.

(Libraries and Institutional members will continue to receive all materials by post).

After the introduction of online access, you can continue to receive paper copies of FMJ – but we will no longer post it to members as a matter of course.

Please let us know if you would like to continue to receive FMJ by post by emailing info@efdss.org or by writing to us at the usual address.

If you have already let us know about your preference, there is no need to reconfirm.