



Board Matters

Number 49. 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 2022**.

From the Chair

As I write this the sun is out and the woolies have been put away for a while: summer festival season is approaching. This year EFDSS will be at Folk by the Oak (London Youth Folk Ensemble), Purbeck Valley and Folk East (National Youth Folk Ensemble) and Sidmouth (our long-running 'EFDSS presents' showcases for emerging artists). If you will be at any of these events our staff will be pleased to see you there, and to have a chat.

But so many things have changed in the past two-and-a-bit years. The dances and gigs may mostly have returned, but we know that many people are not able to attend, or are worried about doing so. We are also seeing evidence that habits have changed. Many of us seem to be less tempted to go out for the evening on the days when we are working from home. Perhaps some have simply got out of the habit, or have found other interests. For the sake of the many talented and dedicated people who make their livings by entertaining and inspiring us, we must hope that this is not a permanent shift. If you are able, do please put a few (or more than a few) events into your diary, and book tickets for them *now*. You will be doing a valuable service for the future of the folk arts, and you will surely have a fantastic time in the process.

At the English Folk Dance and Song Society we are, of course, also dedicated to encouraging grass-roots activities of all sorts, all around England. A core element of this is finding more ways to introduce new generations to folk dance and folk music. Our Resource Bank of educational materials provides free resources to anyone who teaches in formal or informal settings. Its expertly produced materials help folk enthusiasts to plan and deliver lessons which are carefully tailored to their audiences – it it sneaks the folk arts into classrooms in all sorts of unexpected ways, too! (Think of History, English, PE and more...) We have recently published content-rich resources on Maypole and Morris Dancing, taking excellent materials prepared by Mike Ruff and presenting online for the first time. These step-by-step (literally) guides include visual and text-based instructions as well as a wealth of media resources – high-quality audio, and in the case of the Morris no fewer than 57 videos recorded by the excellent Fool's Gambit. They can all be freely downloaded and shared for non-commercial educational use. I am delighted also that our Education staff have supported a high profile for English folk songs and tunes in the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music's Classroom 200 project. Amongst their 200 recordings of inspiring music in a range of styles, plus accompanying lesson plans, a grand total of 14 are linked to our own Resource Bank.

Our work to support the artists of tomorrow is also continuing. Applications are coming in now for the next round of our Alan James Bursaries. These will support artists to explore new creative ideas inspired by and sourced from English folk music, and mark the tenth year of our Creative Bursary and Residency Programme. In the spirit of Alan's eclectic musical tastes and his ability to foster exciting artistic collaborations, we are particularly encouraging applications which explore English folk music in the context of cross-genre or cross-art form collaborations and explorations. But English folk music must be the core element of the proposal.

Finally, we have now finished consulting with a wide range of people – members, participants and more – about a possible name change. I must emphasise again that we really are listening to all views on this important topic, and that discussions are continuing at board level. Contrary to views that seem to be circulating this process really has been about consultation – nothing is a foregone conclusion – and we all want to get this right, so we can continue to strengthen our representation of English folk dance and music for future generations.

Thank you again for your ongoing support.

Lorna Aizlewood *Chair*

Board Meetings

The Board met by Zoom on 19 March 2022. Apologies were received from Robyn Chicot, Alan Davey, Fi Fraser, Lucy Hooberman, Ayub Khan and Arti Prashar. The remainder of the Board together with the Chief Executive and the Company Secretary attended.

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved. It was reported that the Board and SMT awayday took place on 29 January. The Chair reported that she had attended the Arts Council England chairs' meeting.

The Treasurer introduced the financial report. In summary there has been a good outcome to the year given the difficult circumstances. The proposed budget for 2022/23 had been circulated prior to the meeting. It was discussed and approved.

The Chief Executive went through the business plan for 2022/3 which had been previously circulated. Audiences were still down on pre-Covid levels. The closing date for the applications for the next round of NPO funding for 2023–26 is 18 May. It was agreed there would be an additional Board meeting to discuss the application prior to submission.

A new Board member to oversee safeguarding is required and Laura Jones volunteered to take on the role.

The Gold Badge Panel for 2022 was confirmed.

The proposed name change was discussed. The consultation with the membership had been completed and consultation with the wider folk and

arts sector will now take place. There will be an update in EDS in June and a fuller report in September.

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

The Board congratulated a member of Sharp's Folk Club on the occasion of his 102nd birthday, when he will be singing at the club which meets at Cecil Sharp House.

The next meeting will be on Tuesday 7 June 2022 at Cecil Sharp House.

Annual General meeting 2022

The Annual General meeting will be held at 11am on **Saturday 12 November 2022**.

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 before 31 July 2022.