

Board Matters

Number 51. Our update for members about the activities of the Board and governance of the English Folk Dance and Song Society. Issued with EDS magazine, Winter 2022.

From the Chair

You have probably already read about Arts Council England's funding decisions for 2023–26. Suffice it to say here that we are very disappointed that the folk arts have been hit with a cut. By our reckoning, government funding dedicated to folk music and dance was already tiny at £1 out of every £760 disbursed by Arts Council England; next year it will be £1 in £1116.

We believe in championing folk music and dance at the heart of England's rich and diverse cultural landscape. We are engaging with the Arts Council as we try to understand how they, and the government itself, view the future of the folk arts in England.

We are absolutely determined that our own funding reduction of £140,000 a year will not significantly affect the Society's core activities.

For example, we have just announced five mini grants of £500 to support individuals and groups/organisations in developing their folk dance activities. **Jo Veal** will develop a magical evening of folk dance, with music and shadow puppetry for the diverse population of South Yorkshire; **Kekezza** will focus on engaging more people in Cornish dance; **Elizabeth Lawson** will teach The Morpeth Rant to her local communities; **Jo Clare** will bring together primary school children and over 60s to learn and perform folk dances together in Greenwich; and the culturally diverse **Movema**, who organise events in

the most deprived areas of Liverpool and Bristol, will share dances with all-female morris dancing side **Boss Morris**.

Our annual Library Lectures will go ahead as planned in the spring, at Cecil Sharp House and online.

We have just announced the National Youth Folk Ensemble's first performance in their latest iteration – at Sunderland's The Fire Station on 23 February – followed by Cecil Sharp House in April and the North East and Yorkshire for festival season.

But we do need to find savings wherever we can, and we are currently assessing all of our activities with the aim of trimming costs. We also need to make more money wherever commercial opportunities arise – starting with maximising the revenue-raising potential of Cecil Sharp House, so venue hire income can support more of our activities throughout England.

Another area which we have identified for immediate development is our membership categories. We feel that there is scope to entice a new cohort of people to join, with the twin benefits of improving our balance sheet at the same time as engaging these people more closely with the folk arts and with the Society. So on the following page you will find notification of an Extraordinary General Meeting on 14 January. We have not delayed in calling this EGM as we want to

start raising much-needed income through membership as soon as we can.

The proposed changes are in two parts:

— To increase the age for our Young People membership from 25 to 30.

— To introduce a new Starter membership, which will be priced at a modest £24 a year (or £2 per month). Starter members will not receive EDS or FMJ; they will not be eligible to benefit from the Charity's Public Liability Insurance; and they will not typically be entitled to other services which may be offered to full members. Starter Membership can therefore be classified as a charitable donation, and the Society will be able to claim Gift Aid on these payments.

See page 5 of the enclosed *EDS Magazine* for more information about these proposals. We have a substantial funding gap to fill, but our work is needed more than ever. We hope that the new Starter memberships will some way towards enabling us to continue and indeed expand on our activities.

Finally, I must pay my own brief tribute here to Paul Sartin, who amongst many achievements over his 51 years received an EFDSS 75th Anniversary Award in 2007. He will be missed by so many.

Lorna Aizlewood, Chair

Board Meeting, 17 September 2022

The Board met by Zoom on 17 September 2022. Nine members of the Board were present together with the Chief Executive and the Company Secretary.

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

The Treasurer reported that the General Purposes Committee had met to review the annual report and accounts. He

summarized the financial position and said that currently we are in line to meet our planned budget.

The Business Plan and the Chief Executive's Report had been previously circulated and were discussed.

The Secretary reported that there were no motions for the AGM and no nominations for the Board being proposed by the

members. The Board noted the continuing membership of the Board and noted that a large number of members will be retiring from the Board in 2023.

The Board sent its condolences to the family of musician Paul Sartin, who died suddenly on 14 September aged 51.

AGM and Board Meeting, 12 November 2022

The EFDSS Annual General Meeting took place on 12 November.

At the AGM the proposed subscriptions for 2023 were approved, Sayer Vincent were reappointed as auditors until the 2023 AGM and the appointments of Arti Prashar's and Angeline Morrison as directors and trustees were confirmed.

The Board met after the AGM. Lorna Aizlewood was re-elected as Chair; Alan Davey was re-elected as Vice Chair and Ed Fishwick was re-elected as Hon Treasurer.

The GPC was unchanged from last year. It's members are Ed Fishwick, Lorna Aizlewood, Fi Fraser, Sherry Neyhus, Mike Heaney and the Chief Executive and Finance Director.

The full minutes of the AGM will be placed on the website shortly and a full report of the Board Meeting will be in the next Board Matters.

EGM, 14 January 2023

An Extraordinary General Meeting of The English Folk Dance and Song Society will take place on 14 January 2023 commencing at 10.00 at Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regent's Park Road, London, NW1 2AY.

It will also be possible to join the meeting online.

Please note the **Instructions for Proxy Voting or Attending Online** on the following page.

Agenda

1. Welcome
2. Apologies for absence
3. Ordinary Resolution 1.
(Proposed by the Board)
To set the maximum age for Younger Generation membership to 30 instead of 25. [See note below]
4. Ordinary Resolution 2.
(Proposed by the Board)
To introduce a new category of "Starter membership". [See note below]

5. Any Other Business.

Note: The background to and the details of these proposals are to be found in an article on Expanding the Membership in the current edition of *English Dance and Song*.

EGM Proxy Voting and online attendance

Proxy appointments on-line or by post and request to attend on-line must be received by 2359 on Tuesday 10 January 2023.

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 EGM, EFDSS, Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regents Park Road, London NW1 7AY. (A letter containing the same information as on the form is also acceptable.)

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

Joint members are each entitled to vote: you can submit your two separate responses by email or by letter, or by taking a photocopy of the form before completing it.

Please read the notes opposite before appointing your Proxy and casting your Votes.

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

Appointing your Proxy

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 Chairman of the meeting will use any discretionary votes to support the resolutions.

Joining the EGM online

To join online please email egm@efdss.org quoting your name and membership number (if known). A Zoom link will be sent out a couple of days before the meeting.

See overleaf >

EGM 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 EGM 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 EGM 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 increase the age limit for Younger Generation membership)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ordinary Resolution 2 (To establish Starter membership)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>