



THE INSTITUTE OF CONSERVATION

ICON 17th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held on 27th October 2021

Online, via Zoom

Present: James Grierson (Chair), William Bennett, May Berkouwer ACR, Richard Bruce, Lauren Burleson, Susan Clowes ACR, Sophie Courtiaud, Ylva Dahnsjo ACR, Diana Davis ACR, Rebecca Ellison ACR, Claire Fry ACR, Mostyn Gale, Helen Ganiaris, Alexandra Gent ACR, Daisy Graham, Hannah Harte ACR, Mel Houston ACR, Sandra Howe, Katarina Kelsey, Martin Kirke, Adam Klups, Barry Knight, Verena Kotonski ACR, Emma Le Cornu ACR, David Leigh, Fiona Macalister ACR, Ksynia Marko ACR, Peter Martindale ACR, Carole Milner, Ticca Ogilvie ACR, Joanna Payne ACR, Clare Prince ACR, Sophie Rowe, Christine Sitwell ACR, Helen Smith ACR, Sarah Staniforth, Ruth Stevens ACR, Chloe Stewart, Michelle Stoddart, Sylvia Sumira ACR, Dominic Wall

In attendance: Sara Crofts (Chief Executive, SC), Geanina Beres (Communications Officer), Chloe Gerrard (Professional Development Officer), Lynette Gill (Icon News Editor), Simon Green (Business Director, SG), Michael Nelles (Head of Membership, MN), Jess Lock (Membership Officer), Patrick Whife (Head of Skills)

Apologies: Caroline Scharfenberg ACR, Duygu Camurcuoglu ACR

1	James Grierson (Chair of Icon, JG) opened the meeting at 5.00 pm, welcomed Icon members to the meeting and outlined the order of business. JG confirmed that the AGM was being recorded.
2	Apologies for absence had been received as recorded above.
3	<p>MINUTES OF THE 16TH AGM ON 21ST OCTOBER 2020</p> <p>The minutes had been previously circulated. The minutes were approved without further alteration and were signed by the Chair as being a true record of the meeting.</p> <p>Proposer: Martin Kirke Seconder: Claire Fry ACR</p> <p>For 30, Against 0, Abstained 5</p>
4	<p>REVIEW OF THE YEAR BY SARA CROFTS, CHIEF EXECUTIVE</p> <p>SC said that it has been a very strange year; COVID had an impact on everyone and every organisation. We are all changed and probably all a little tired by now. There were many</p>

	<p>challenges; and some sadness in terms of the loss of jobs and the curtailment of projects. Icon is no exception. Some projects had to be put on hold and we made less progress with our membership growth plans than we would have hoped. But there was good news too:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteers stepped up to the mark <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Conservators Together at Home and other group activity ○ Ethical guidance and refreshed standards ○ We were able to keep accreditation and mentoring going with online assessments and also to mark the 20th anniversary • We secured funding from Culture Recovery Fund (CRF) to help with operating costs and also to invest in a new membership database and website. This has been quite a learning curve – a bit like driving an F1 sportscar when you previously only owned a rusty Ford Fiesta. • We set up the Environmental Sustainability Network and have made good strides in progressing the ideas in our environmental action plan. <p>Policy work continued</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gathering evidence on COVID impact, creating and maintaining resources on the website and feeding into Government thinking via DCMS • Value of conservation report and associated briefing documents <p>Lastly, we are no longer responsible for office premises, having moved in with the Chartered Institute of Water and Environment Management (CIWEM) in Farringdon, which is a BREAAAM Excellent building, meaning it reaches very high environmental standards.</p> <p>I would also like to thank our active members for everything that they do to support their professional body and to say a personal thanks to all those who offer me and the team encouragement along the way. We look forward to a brighter future.</p>
5	<p>TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2021</p> <p>James Grierson said that he would like to talk briefly about some elements of the past year, to touch on our financial performance described within the report and accounts, and our financial position going forward. He would then say something about the work of three Task & Finish Groups that have done vital work for us over the period.</p> <p>This last year has been quite challenging and, as Sara has described it, Icon, in common with many membership-based charities, has endured a sort of organisational long COVID. The office has had to deal with the advocacy, lobbying and guidance associated with COVID, with grant applications, with professional standards and accreditation, and with enabling the Groups and Networks to deliver content to the wider world. And I must tell you that the Icon office is tiny – something that I think is not always understood – and I'd just like to express my appreciation for the hard work and commitment shown by this small group of people, working for much of the time off their kitchen tables.</p>

	<p>We finished the year with a deficit of £38,657. Comparing our income and expenditure with previous years can be a bit misleading because some of our income and expenditure has, historically, been on a pass through basis. Suffice it to say that the deficit was unwelcome and could have been worse had the large and unforeseen investment in a new CRM system not been balanced by a sizeable one-off charitable donation and our successful bid for nearly £100k from the Culture Recovery Fund.</p> <p>Clearly the pandemic has been an incredibly difficult period in which to plan income and, to a much lesser extent, expenditure and Icon is by no means the only organisation to have found this a hard period to plan for financially. It is important, however, that members recognise that this was the third year in a row when we finished with a deficit which cumulatively totals nearly £125,000. This year, our interim forecasts show a reduction in all income lines against budget with the risk that we, again, will show a significant deficit at the year end.</p> <p>There is an underlying challenge to us here. Our free reserves are a considerable distance from where we want them to be, down from £171k in 2019 to £103k now. We aspire to hold free reserves of £360k and we need to be generating surpluses, not deficits, to get to that level. We are hoping, again, that we may be successful with a further Culture Recovery Fund application, but we cannot continue to rely on financial windfalls to stay viable. We need to face the truth that the Icon that members wish to see is not adequately supported by what members pay for their membership. We can work hard to secure more events, advertising and sponsorship income, although this is hard at the moment, and above all we can focus on building a larger membership but we will need Icon members to help the organisation and, in doing so, help themselves.</p> <p>Sara's overview of the emerging new strategy for Icon will pick up some of the themes around the search for a more secure financial footing but, to illustrate just one aspect of the need to harness the power of your relationships, Michael Nelles will shortly be announcing a Member-get-Member scheme and I'd ask you each to reflect on what you could do to persuade a colleague or friend to join Icon. If only every other member succeeded in recruiting just one person we'd transform Icon's finances because this is a membership organisation that needs more membership income.</p> <p>Turning to slightly more cheerful matters, the other day I was reading a piece of research on membership organisations and a phrase caught my eye. It defined "Participatory Membership as a new approach which sees organisations embrace members as potential participants in the cause, not just Consumers of benefits." So, with this concept of participatory membership in mind, notwithstanding the inevitable focus of the management team and of the Board of Trustees on financial matters, I now want to tell you a bit about the work of three Task & Finish groups established by the Board over the last year.</p> <p>First, the Board of Trustees was concerned to ensure that the work of the board was as accessible and transparent as possible and to ensure that everyone benefitted from a better two-way flow of information – from the membership to the board and vice versa. So the Board of Trustees established a group on Board Communications led by Duygu Camurcuoglu. The group consulted widely with members and examined examples of good practice in other organisations and came up with a long list of recommendations for implementation over time.</p>
--	--

	<p>For example, we now publish a review of each Board meeting that is written up, circulated and put on the website soon after each meeting. We have reinstated the monthly Chief Executive drop-in sessions and we also intend to publish interviews with each of the trustees so that members can get a better sense of who we all are as people. You will have seen an increased number of articles about Icon business on the website, and in Iconnects, and I hope you will have noticed a warmer tone of voice used in Icon communications – people outside Icon have certainly commented on this. And this is just the beginning.</p> <p>The next T&F group was established as the Diversity & Inclusion Group chaired by Pierrette Squires and this reflected the deep concern of the Trustees to do what they can to ensure that Icon and, ultimately the conservation profession, is more representative of the society we serve. The first part of the group's report was tabled at the September Trustees' meeting with the second part due in December. It's a substantial and far-reaching piece of work that is grounded in very extensive discussions with a wide range of members. It is also realistic in its recognition that we can't do everything at once and that this is a process rather than an event. One small step, of course, has been to create a Reserved Seat for an Emerging Professional Member but we recognise that there is significant work to be done to make routes into the profession more accessible to a more diverse group of people. One small way in which interested members can help is to be prepared to give the odd talk in schools and if you'd like to find out more there is a brilliant national scheme called Inspiring the Future that we are supporting; you can find out more on the Icon website.</p> <p>The third T&F group that has worked extremely hard this year under Sophie Rowe's leadership has been the Conferences T&F group. This considered the wider subject of Icon conferences and Icon-branded events and was not just about the triennial conference. The review led to the introduction of Icon's newly formed Conferences Committee, co-chaired by Rebecca Ellison and Rachel Swift. The Committee will be a resource for Icon's Groups and Networks to facilitate the organisation of major conferences that are successful, financially viable, on-brand and aligned to Icon's Strategy. The committee will be introducing themselves to the Groups over the coming months to find out what their particular needs are. The committee has already produced a master calendar of events and decided on the timing and theme of the next Icon Conference, which is going to be a one-day virtual event held in June 2022. The aim of the conference will be to support the launch of Icon's refreshed strategy and bring it to life.</p> <p>To go back to my earlier quote, the work of these groups, and some of the other initiatives Sara mentioned in her review of the year, are about Icon members "as participants in a cause." and I hope that this phrase will resonate with you as you hear Sara talk about Strategy 2030.</p> <p>JG invited questions regarding the Trustees Annual Report and Accounts and there were none.</p> <p>RESOLUTIONS</p> <p>Ordinary Resolution 1 – To receive the Trustees' Annual Report and Accounts for the year ending 31st March 2021.</p>
--	---

	<p>Proposer: Richard Bruce Seconder: Martin Kirk</p> <p>The combined votes of those members present at the meeting and those voting by proxy were:</p> <p>For 94 Against 1 Abstained 0</p> <p>Ordinary Resolution 2 – To authorise the Trustees to appoint the auditors to serve until the end of the next Annual General Meeting and to authorise the Trustees to decide the remuneration to be paid to the auditors.</p> <p>Proposer: Richard Bruce Seconder: Sophie Rowe ACR</p> <p>The combined votes of those members present at the meeting and those voting by proxy were:</p> <p>For 91 Against 1 Abstained 3</p>				
6	<p>Results of the Recruitment process for a new co-opted Trustee</p> <p>Martin Kirke, Chair of the Nominations Committee described the process which had led to an excellent response with several very good candidates interviewed. A variety of cost-effective means had been used to promote the vacancy to a wide range of society. The appointment panel had been delighted to recommend Richard Bruce who not only had very good qualifications and experience but who was also very motivated and experienced in supporting small charities. He has now been appointed to Chair the Finance Committee.</p> <p>Richard Bruce thanked MK for his remarks and said he had been greeted with energy, acuity, friendliness and hard work by Trustees and staff.</p> <p>Results of elections to the Board of Trustees</p> <p>Simon Green, Company Secretary, reminded members that, as well as elections for three Unreserved Seats, there was also an election for a new Reserved Seat for an Emerging Professional Member. There had also been vacancies for the Reserved Seats for Wales and Northern Ireland but no candidates had stood for them.</p> <p>He announced that the results were:</p> <p>Unreserved Seat</p> <table> <tr> <td></td><td>NUMBER OF VOTES</td></tr> <tr> <td>Sophie Rowe ACR</td><td>262 ELECTED</td></tr> </table>		NUMBER OF VOTES	Sophie Rowe ACR	262 ELECTED
	NUMBER OF VOTES				
Sophie Rowe ACR	262 ELECTED				

	<p>Diana Davis ACR 199 ELECTED Michelle Stoddart 194 ELECTED Ticca Ogilvie ACR PhD 193 NOT ELECTED</p> <p>Reserved Seat for an Emerging Professional Member</p> <p>NUMBER OF VOTES</p> <p>Louise Davison BA 148 ELECTED Emma Smith BA MPhil 125 NOT ELECTED Catherine Harris 70 NOT ELECTED</p> <p>SG said he would like to thank all the candidates, including those who were not successful, for offering to serve on the Icon Board.</p> <p>JG congratulated all the successful candidates and invited SC to give a presentation on Strategy 2030.</p>
7	<p>Strategy 2030</p> <p>Sara Crofts, Chief Executive, said that she hoped that those present had been able to participate in the various conversations she had had to develop the new Strategy. Some of this has been captured in the horizon scanning document that you will find on the website. This had led to a number of aspirations which were summarised in the slide show. Icon needs to be visible so as to be able to influence decision making in the cultural sphere. This has led to the main theme of the new Strategy which is “Recognition – everyone understands the relevance of conservation”. The Strategy document will be very short and to the point. She described the four main audiences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young People; • Stakeholders; • The Public and • The Profession. <p>The Trustees will discuss the document and we will share it with members for comment in the New Year. She mentioned a number of issues including whether it is now the time to explore Chartership, Fellowship, Patrons and applying to become an Arts Council England Sector Support Organisation. This would, if approved, provide some core operating costs. We need to address the balance wanting more advocacy and services at less cost and the underlying financial difficulties this causes. This will need more collaboration between staff, members and our groups and networks. We will also be looking for wide sponsorship support. We intend to grow and diversify our membership. There is a great opportunity to expand accreditation abroad, facilitated by now being able to do this remotely in future.</p> <p>JG invited discussion on the presentation. Martin Kirke welcomed the proposed approach and said that it offered some big opportunities for growth. He mentioned Supporters and the explosion of public interest in conservation and he considered that there were many people who had time and money.</p>

	<p>Carole Milner supported the proposals wholeheartedly and said that there is a sea of allied professionals who could be interested in joining.</p> <p>Dominic Wall said that he knew many conservators who belonged to the Archives & Records Association and the Collections Trust and wondered whether some of them could be recruited. He would like to see conservation apprenticeships succeed for which Icon is the End Point Assessment Organisation.</p> <p>JG invited other questions and there were none. He thanked his fellow trustees for their contributions in a testing time, especially Sophie Rowe the Vice-Chair who provided wise and helpful support and he also thanked all those who had served on Group and Network Committees and Task and Finish Groups. He also thanked John Speed, Icon's external accountant for his help in a difficult year.</p>
	JG closed the meeting at 5.57 p.m.
	<p>Signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting</p> <p>..... Date</p>