

Open Morris Annual General Meeting 2019

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Appendix 1 – 2018 Minutes

Minutes of Open Morris Annual General Meeting 2018

Open Morris Annual General Meeting 2018
Sunday 18th November
Stourbridge

Present:

Officers and Area Reps

Nicki Pickering (NP) Chair, Wales & North West Area Rep
Liz Scholey (LS) Treasurer
John Scholey (JS) Membership Secretary, South East Area Rep
Norm Warren (NW) Secretary
Jenny Cox (JC) Magazine Editor, Central Area Rep
Robin James (RJ) East Anglia Area Rep
Craig Simmonds (CS) West Midlands Area Rep

Member Sides Represented

Bedcote Morris – Sharon Dodds
Beorma – Tony Roberts
Billy No Mates – Eddie Carter
Brooms, Bricks and Bowlers – Liz Scholey
Bunnies From Hell – Lucy Wilkins
Cadi Ha – Nicki Pickering (Foreman)
Castle Clog – Chris Burton
Earl of Stamford Morris – Christine Dover (Foreman)
Fenstanton Morris – Robin James
Fowlers Molly – Chris Lamb
Harlequin Morris – Craig Simmonds
Holt Ridge Festival Side – Conor Smith
Holt Ridge Morris – Norm Warren
Lady Bay Revellers – Gill Willson (Treasurer), Stephanie Ledsam
Madcap – Mike Salter (Squire)
Ragged Oak – Sam Davey
Roses are Red – John Scholey
The Acid Morris – Laurence Scarrott
Theale Tattoo – Jenny Cox

Individual and Life Members

Chris Hall (Life Member)
Douglas Pickering (Individual Member)

Guests

Mike Everett (Morris Federation)
Jenny Everett (JE) (Morris Federation)
Pete Simpson (PS) (The Morris Ring)
Mark Carter (The Morris Ring)

1. Opening of AGM

Meeting opened at 14.34pm. NP made welcome comments, welcomed Morris Federation and Morris Ring representatives, gave brief housekeeping notices and thanked Bedcote for arranging the venue, food and workshop. Jenny Everett and Pete Simpson were announced as Tellers for voting and thanked for offering their services.

2. Apologies for absence

Officers and Area Reps

Malcolm Hills (MH) Web Officer, North East Area Rep

Member sides:

Allington Morris
Beltane Border Morris
Borderline Morris
Brigantii Border Morris
Buttercross Belles
Cracken
Crosskey Clog
Devils Jump Clog
Eken
Fishbone Ash
Heartease & St Neots Sweeps & Milkmaids
Foxs Morris
Illustrious Order of Fools and Beasts
Lepton Morris
Moseley Morris
Mucky Mountains
Phoenix Morris
Pig Dyke Molly
Rattlejag Morris
Shinfield Shambles
St. Katharine's Morris
Styx of Stroud
Tower Ravens
Wharfedale Wayzgoose

White Horse Morris
Wicket Brood
Yorkshire Coast
Young Miscellany

Individual Members:

Ann Baines
Sue Deacon

Life Members:

Wendy Bostock
John Clifford
Kim Woodward

3. Minutes of AGM 2017 were taken as read.

4. Adoption of Minutes of AGM 2017

Appendix 1 – 2017 Minutes

It was noted that the officers would “try and source” the original website Constitution template rather than “sourcing and publishing a Constitution template”.

Minutes with this alteration adopted by the meeting, proposed by Earl of Stamford (Christine Dover) and seconded by Beorma (Tony Roberts).

5. Matters arising from the Minutes

8.d: Side Constitution Template:

NP noted that officers have been trying to locate the original, so far unsuccessfully. Others have been looked at but have not been suitable. NP asks for any potentially suitable side constitution to be sent to her.

NW: Tony Roberts (TR) of Beorma has contributed a Constitution which NW has used to draft a possible version.

TR: Having a side constitution is essential.

8.e: Aligning the membership year with the financial year:

JS: This has been completed.

LS The membership year and financial year have not been changed but can now be reconciled.

8.e: Relating income from subs in 2016/17 vs membership numbers.

Appendix 2 - Explanatory note

NP has looked in detail at relevant accounts and notes that in 2015/16 the balance sheet did show accurate income and expenditure. However, all income was grouped erroneously as membership. There were receipts that were included in this, insurance document payments and Barclays goodwill payments totalling £231.60. This was also a year where some sides left us, totalling £140 in refunded subs.

NP explained the figures and offered to make copies of the explanatory note available.

LS has adopted a new way of recording the accounts to prevent similar occurrences in the future.

11: Map of Area Representative regions:

On the website each Area is accompanied by a map showing icons for all sides in that Area. Contact information for the sides can be found here.

JC will include a colour coded map in the next copy of the magazine.

19: Sue Dyke Award:

The competition took place with 5 independent judges. A tankard was donated by Lady Bay Revellers to be presented to the winner. Winner, Runner-Up and Highly Commended prizes are to be awarded this year. It is hoped that the competition will continue for some years.

20: Renewal Forms:

JS to cover this later in the agenda.

6. Officer's Reports, Officer's Comments and queries from the floor

Appendix 3 - Chair's Report

Appendix 4 - Membership Secretary's Report

Appendix 5 - Secretary's Report

Appendix 6 - Web Officer's Report

Appendix 7 - Treasurer's Report

A: Chair: taken as read.

B: Membership Secretary:

JS expanded on the submitted report: It had been noted that we were going to include an "opt in" for email communications, this has been done.

We are up to 141 members at the end of the financial year. We had 11 new member sides in the 2018 renewal period. Since the end of the OM financial year we have welcomed 3 further sides. 4 sides have left, all of whom have disbanded. There is also a new individual member joining us shortly.

We no longer use the side record sheet as members can now populate their own record on the database using a link sent out to them. We have also ceased to send paper statements of insurance cover, emailing the document out as a PDF instead. There is no longer a charge for replacements. Members who believe they have not been sent their statement of insurance cover should first check their spam filter for missing emails.

Last year members were asked to tick boxes to agree to certain terms, including acceptance of the terms and conditions of the Open Morris constitution. This specific acceptance will only be included for newcomers in the future, although some assurances regarding data protection may be requested as part of future renewals.

The only form that we still have is the Application Form for New Members.

The aim is for this year's renewal to have no attachments and to ensure that it is entirely customised to the individual member sides within the body of the email.

Sides are urged to pay online (eg: Standing Order or Bank Transfer) rather than by cheque if possible.

The changes introduced this year will improve the renewal system for both sides and Officers.

C: Secretary:

NW included a verbal addition to his statement that he is "available" to be an Area Rep and that he is happy to do "all he can" to support whoever is successful in securing the role.

D: Web Officer: taken as read.

NP: MH is always happy to receive comments.

JS: He recently spotted a minor problem with the website and was pleased with the quick and appreciative response that his input received.

NW: MH has dealt with absentee voting very well including very quickly fixing a problem that had arisen. NW wished to publicly thank him. The Absentee Votes relevant to this meeting have been processed and will be included in the count. Any comments on Absentee Voting should be emailed to MH.

E: Treasurer:

LS: Apologised for the report going out in two batches as she wished to issue members with the full breakdown of the income and expenditure rather than just a summary.

This year LS has increased the number of headings for expenditure so that different activities can be more accurately mapped. These may be reviewed before the next AGM. All income and expenditure can now be matched as stated earlier.

LS would prefer online payments rather than cheques. This is especially important as LS and JS are away for a period in January and will not be able to process cheques.

LS has redesigned the expenses claim form to facilitate keeping accurate records of different areas of expenditure.

LS noted that OM is roughly breaking even, if the 3 further sides that had joined since the end of the OM financial year were included. We have had 4 sides join since last year.

We have over £12,000 in the bank. LS would like to consider in future how much money we need to keep in the bank account to ensure we stay financially afloat and how much we can spend on future initiatives. LS would like the committee to look at this over the coming year.

NP: LS has included her suggested appropriate subscription rates in the Treasurer's report.

The Non-UK subscription has been raised in line with postage costs, and takes into account the fact that Non-UK side are not covered by our Public Liability insurance.

NP also noted that this year had been an expensive year due to our role in organising the

JMO DoD, including a charitable donation and officers' expenses.

NP: If any members have any initiatives planned (eg: Days of Dance/Workshops) that may be suitable for financial help, they should get in touch to be considered.

CH (Life Member) Treasurer's Report accepted.

CS (Harlequin Morris) seconded.

Signed by NP and LS.

Action: LS to consider setting aside funds for initiatives and discuss amongst the Committee

NOTE:

CH: Thanked all officers for all the work they have been doing.

NP: proposed a vote of thanks to NW who is stepping down as Secretary and presented him with a "Past Officer" badge.

7. Other Official's Reports and queries from the floor

Appendix 8 - Officials' Reports

A: Editor of Dancing on – Jenny Cox (JC): taken as read.

B: Area Representatives:

i: Central – Jenny Cox: taken as read.

ii: East Anglia – Robin James: None submitted.

iii: North East – Malcolm Hills: None submitted.

iv: South East – John Scholey: taken as read.

JS also wished to include that he is representing Roses are Red. They sent their thanks to all the Officers and OM for doing such a good job.

JS reiterated that he will stand down as AR in the near future and that the Committee are considering applications to fill this role.

v: Wales and North West – Nicki Pickering: taken as read.

vi: West Midlands – Craig Simmonds: None submitted.

Impromptu Note: NW asked that anyone who does not feel confident in updating their own details on the database should contact MH who will provide assistance.

JS: members can "toggle" various items of data and control which information is publicly available on the website.

NW: An additional email address for each member side would also be appreciated to facilitate uninterrupted communication.

Discussion:

CH: Area Representatives were put in place before the advent of internet communication. Do we still need this role?

NP likes the personal touch of being able to go up to sides and introduce herself as an Area Rep.

CH wonders how many representatives do this on a regular basis?

CS finds it difficult to put aside time for this.

Lucy Wilkins (Bunnies from Hell): Could we have different Facebook groups for each Area? This might not be a great time commitment.

NP: This has been previously discussed at an OM Officials' meeting, but difficulties were identified.

JC: We had lengthy discussions about using social media for networking between all JMO sides within OM areas. A considered proposal is being drafted and will be discussed amongst the Committee in the future.

NP: Had emailed all the OM sides in her Area to remind them about the AGM but this did not appear to increase attendance or Absentee Voting.

NW: Some of our Areas are sparsely populated with OM sides, and Area Representatives must work across borders if they wish to be effective in their roles.

RJ (Fenstanton): Fenstanton don't consider borders in organising ales and dance outs.

Action: Committee to consider this issue.

8. Election of Officers

NP: explained that Pete Simpson and Jenny Everett would be acting as Tellers and would count the ballot papers and add in the Absentee Votes.

PS announced the results. 27 votes were cast, 6 as absentee votes. All nominated Officers were elected unanimously, with no abstentions.

Chair: Nicki Pickering

Membership Secretary: John Scholey

Secretary: Jenny Cox

Treasurer: Liz Scholey

Web Officer: Malcolm Hills

The new committee look forward to working together.

Note: the election results were announced after item 9.

9. Appointment of Officials

JC is standing as Secretary, but is happy to carry on as magazine editor alongside this role. However, JC is looking for a magazine assistant she could consider as a “sub editor”, who would take an active role in sourcing content for the magazine.

Any interested parties can contact JC directly.

JC offered a hearty vote of thanks to Hilary Maidstone, who has been proof reading the magazines.

JS plans to stand down as Area Representative soon. The committee are currently considering his replacement as there has been some interest. This will hopefully be included in the next magazine edition which should come out before Christmas.

Clare Mach has recently been appointed to cover the “South Central” Area – Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

We are looking for Area Reps for South East, East Midlands and the North East. NP has recently compiled draft Terms of Reference for Area Reps and anyone potentially interested in the role can contact her to view these. Chris Hall offers her services for the North East once she has moved.

Action: Committee to finalise Area Representative Terms of Reference.

We are also currently discussing a new post for a co-opted member. This will be finalised in the next couple of weeks and may be a new appointment. This will be included on the website and emailed to member sides if discussions are successful.

10. Appointment of Independent Reviewer

Steven Archer, former Morris Ring Treasurer, was appointed last year, and has agreed to be reappointed this year. He has done an excellent and thorough job, and LS appreciated his validation of her accounts.

The meeting voted unanimously to appoint Steven Archer as Independent Reviewer.

11. Nominations for Honorary/Life Membership

There were no nominations.

12. Constitution Motions and Amendments as published with the Agenda

Appendix 9 - Motion Documents

Both motions have been submitted by the committee.

A: Motion 1 – to introduce an Associate Membership category:

JE: Morris Federation Associate Members do have voting rights.

NP: Morris Federation online constitution states that this is a not the case.

TR: (Beorma) – asks why would anyone want to be an Associate Member?

NP: It may help sides to get involved with other local sides, would allow access to the OM magazine. There are several sides who are members of more than one Organisation.

NW: Wonders why the subscription rate for Associate Members will be as those for Non-UK Members for the 2019-2020 renewal year and contests this.

NP: This has been previously agreed at the OM Officials' meeting.

Christine Dover: This must be because the Non-UK Members are not covered by Public Liability insurance.

NP: Agreed. Non-UK Members are not covered by the JMO Public Liability insurance policy, but are subject to higher magazine postage costs, so the rate is designed to reflect this balance.

The aim was to keep things simple by offering one rate only for teams that do not require insurance.

NW: The membership database records include some information from a historical survey of members that appear to show different numbers of magazines being sent to member sides at their request.

JC: This is merely a record of information requested in the past. We send out 5 copies to every member side as standard, unless they have requested not to receive printed copies.

Action: JC to liaise with MH regarding this information.

The meeting voted unanimously to adopt this Motion.

Action: Committee to update the Constitution.

B: Motion 2 - to amend Constitution Paragraph 25 regarding data protection as in the Motion documents.

The meeting voted unanimously to adopt this Motion.

Action: Committee to update the Constitution.

13. Late Motions and Late Amendments:

None put forward.

14. JMO National DoD 2018:

NP: Gave a brief summary of the event. The Council were supportive. First Aider gave services free of charge. Excellent surfaces/spots. £750 was donated to the Pancreatic Cancer Research charity including a £12 top up from OM. The DoD was filmed by the BBC for Blue Peter and also for a documentary to be shown by the BBC.

An official thank you was put forward to Crosskey Clog for hosting the DoD.

TR: The whole day was fantastic.

NP is in the process of compiling a checklist of items to consider for future JMO DoDs. This may be useful for future hosts when planning and on the day. This will be available to OM members and to the Morris Federation and the Morris Ring if wanted.

Action: NP to complete checklist and discuss with officers

15. Chair's Report on other JMO business

A brief summary of matters discussed at the JMO meeting in February.

A: Foreman's handbook: This will not be an actual handbook but rather an advisory panel to help side teachers who are in need of assistance in running practices. Each organisation has approached three individuals to help create this. The questionnaire they answered has gone to Melanie Barber (President of the Morris Federation) to collate the responses. Decisions will have to be made regarding what format the "handbook" may have.

JE (Morris Federation) states that there has been mention of a Wiki for this.

B: Supporting new side start ups: There is an ongoing project to provide a single link between the 3 Morris Organisations so that any new sides with questions can be directed to the best person. Peter De Courcy (Morris Ring) has been approached to facilitate this.

TR (Beorma): It would be good to add to this a list of sides/people in any area who would be willing to support new sides.

NP: That is the part of the idea

NW: This may be a suitable role for Area Representatives.

C: What defines a JMO Regional DoD: This came up at our OM Officials' meeting. It was suggested that the term JMO DoD should only refer to a National day of dance rather than a regional Day of Dance. A potential issue may arise in trying to maintain the usual ratio of sides between each of the Organisations in certain area.

Eddie Carter (Billy No Mates): "JMO" doesn't necessarily mean anything to anyone except those in the Morris. A clearer title eg: National Day of Morris Dancing may be more suitable as it tells those outside the Morris world exactly what it is happening.

NW: This discussion arose from a JMO AGM discussion regarding the JMO statement of purpose.

JE: Stated that there has never been an official JMO Regional DoD, though some events have used that title.

NP: Perhaps such events should just be called a "Regional DoD" rather than a Regional JMO DOD.

JE: This may just become "National DoD" as the organisations continue to work closely together.

Action: Officers to discuss with other JMO representatives

D: JMO National DoD 2019: Saturday March 30th is the next JMO DOD in Manchester. The application process is being run differently this year. All sides should now have received their invitation and link to the application form provided by Medlock Rapper. It has been suggested by Melanie Barber that we should not have the usual proportional representation as in previous years, as the hosts plan to include 60 sides and 40 rapper sides which should allow anyone applying to attend. This will be reviewed once applications are in.

16. Items for discussion raised before start of the Meeting

Appendix 10 – Discussion Points

A: JMO National DoD 2021

NP: The Morris Ring have suggested all three Organisations join together to hold an exceptional JMO DOD to celebrate Coventry's year as City of Culture. This has implications for OM as it would ordinarily fall to us to host that year. It would mean missing our year, taking the year after or swapping 2020 with the Morris Ring.

PS (Morris Ring): Plans have not yet been made to organise how this would work with all Organisations working together, however, the Ring already has plans in place for 2020.

JE: The Morris Federation would be keen to keep the rotation in the same order as they have just amended their constitution to elect their committee in line with the 3 year rotation. OM would not be able to use 2022.

NP: For the 2021 DoD, OM do not have any sides located near Coventry and would possibly not be able to be involved in the organisation of a joint DoD.

TR (Beorma): Coventry perhaps does not have many good places to dance. Also there has been friction between a side in Birmingham and a side in Coventry, leading to some difficulties.

Both Sharon Dodd (Bedcote) and Laurence Scarrott (The Acid Morris) stated that they know nothing about Coventry and would not know enough about the area to help organise a JMO DoD.

PS noted that as a local, he feels that Coventry is completely different from this area of the world (Birmingham/Stourbridge).

NP asked for it to be minuted that OM are not keen on giving up their turn in the rota in order to help organise a DoD in Coventry.

Christine Dover (Earl of Stamford): It would be a shame to miss out on the Coventry City of Culture year, and previous JMO DODs have received funding when held in Cities of Culture eg Hull & Liverpool.

NP: OM would miss out on their turn for six years running.

PS: There are Morris Federation Sides around Coventry who could be involved easily.

JE: One of the joys of the JMO DoD is that they have a different flavour depending on the organisation who are running the day. It would be a shame to lose this flavour, and perhaps the Ring could organise their own Regional DoD separately.

Gill Willson (Lady Bay Revellers): There are lots of cities that she has reluctantly visited through Morris which have turned out to be surprisingly excellent locations. Gill also notes that the three Organisations work incredibly well together and speculated that perhaps there would no longer be any need for the three Organisations in the future.

TR (Beorma): Beorma would have nothing against a JMO DoD in Coventry but that they would not be able to be involved.

JC: Her sides also feel that it would be a shame for OM to miss their turn in the rotation, partly because of the different flavour of each day depending on the organisation who are leading the day.

CH proposed that our officers go to the JMO meeting to discuss this.

Seconded by NW (Holt Ridge Morris).

20 for, 1 abstention.

Action: Officers to discuss this amongst the JMO and reach a conclusion

B: Morris Dance Database

Colin Andrews (Morris Ring) and Anahata have been working together on a website to compile information about all UK sides, their location, dances and music. They have started to populate this online at morrisdancedatabase.org.uk. The database currently shows side contact information and dance names, where Colin could find these on side websites. The long term plan is for sides to be able to add to this with music, dance notation and videos to create an archive for the future. Colin is asking for sponsorship from the 3 Morris Organisations in order to pay Anahata for his time spent on the upkeep of the website - £80 annually each. NP asked the membership for comments regarding whether this is a worthwhile project to support.

Sam Davies (Ragged Oak): Asked for clarification of what Anahata is (a melodeon player on the folk circuit). This is a great idea, that we should support but is there a GDPR question to be asked regarding this?

Chris Burton (Bedcote): What is this for?

NP: It is a resource for those who want to find out more about morris dancing, where sides are and what dances are performed.

Chris Burton (Bedcote): Perhaps they should just ask a Morris dancer. Does this technology actually have any use?

Chris Lamb (Fowlers Molly): Perhaps this resource could keep the different ways of doing a dance adopted by different sides as a record.

NP: This would be a written record that would not get lost over time.

Chris Lamb (Fowlers Molly): The use of video links would be a good resource for sides to share when choosing a version.

Chris Hall: Asked if the Ring had any comments on this.

PS: It has not been discussed formally.

LS: Is concerned about big, ambitious IT projects. It may be useful but may also not be. It could just become a lot of data which is not updated when there are already plentiful sources of information on the web about this. If we were to spend money on this, it would have to be a useful resource for our members.

Eddie Carter (Billy No Mates): Advertises Knights of King Ina who dance all of their dances based on plentiful research to perform dances from the past – Andrew Knight. Promoted the idea of good research

RJ: These projects are often run on a voluntary basis and can therefore be left unfinished. Robin notes that here this cannot happen as there has been money put into it.

NP: Costs could rise if Anahata moves on and someone else takes over. We would have no control over this.

CS: What are the benefits to the membership and is it worth the cost of £80 a year?

NW: – Went to a conference at Cecil Sharp House where archiving morris information was spoken about. He noted that it is an incredibly complicated problem and that there should be an access system. Norm states that he so far has not seen an access system available for this website and that there have been no pilots where the JMO can see what use it might be. Norm notes that they seem to be archiving the information which the Morris Ring and the Morris Federation already have.

In Favour - 6

Against - 8

Abstention – 8

Action: NP to contact Colin Andrews

17. The Sue Dyke Award Presentation

The entries for the Sue Dyke Award were on display. 12 year old Cerys Ayre was awarded “Highly Commended” and a £25 prize for competing well against those who were greatly her senior. Runner-Up Megan Evans received £50, and the Winner was Conor Smith who received £100 and a year’s guardianship of the commemorative tankard, which has been engraved with his name.

Gill Willson of Lady Bay Revellers spoke to the meeting about Sue, who has now been mourned through 2 dance seasons, since she was taken ill. She was an integral member of the side and was thoroughly committed to the dancing, singing, and all the other activities associated with Morris. It had been fantastic to view and read the pieces of work entered for the award. Gill said that Sue would be very pleased, as she was interested in the continuation of Morris and in encouraging young people to continue with the passtime that she really loved.

Gill presented the award to the winner and to Craig Simmonds on behalf of Megan Evans. Cerys Ayre’s prize will be passed on by Chris Hall.

NW thanked JC and NP for co-ordinating a group of judges with such a wide range of experience and expertise. He proposed a vote of thanks to the judges and in particular to Ed Worrall for his comments as spokesperson for the judges.

Seconded by Christine Dover (Earl of Stamford)

NP: The judges' comments will be available in the magazine and on the website.

NP will ask the judges for any further comments regarding the running of the competition and would like to receive any ideas for future themes from the membership.

18. AOB

1: RJ wondered if the large size of the meeting room and recording technology were necessary.

NP: The recording is useful in case of future debate or difficulty interpreting the Minutes.

JS: Microphones were perhaps not so important for sound level during the meeting but they must be used for the recording unless we sit in a circle around a central mic.

Tony Roberts (Beorma): We may book a smaller room next year but then many more people might want to come.

NP noted that we need to have a larger room for a workshop and food.

2: NW said that he will miss working with and for the membership.

3: CH wished to draw attention to the fact that John Bacon (OM Honorary Member) had been awarded a gold EFDSS badge in recognition of his work in the Morris and Folk world. She explained John's role in various Morris projects. On behalf of OM, NW & NP had attended the MF AGM where the presentation took place. NP mentioned this in her report, as did NW, and many have congratulated John personally. This will also feature in the upcoming magazine.

19. Date and venue of the next AGM

JC offered on behalf of Theale Tattoo to host next year's AGM on Sunday 10th November 2019, near Reading.

CH: It is an unwritten rule that we avoid Remembrance Sunday, as many sides have other commitments.

JC: The date had been chosen to avoid Morris and folk events, and to ensure that the side would have plenty of members available in order to properly run an AGM, complete with a workshop and catering.

The meeting felt that Remembrance Sunday would be a problematic date for an AGM.

Mike Salter (Madcap): This meeting is only just quorate and if there are too many representatives missing due to Remembrance events then we may struggle to reach a quorum.

JC: The Central Area is well populated with OM sides and it may be easier to achieve a quorum in this area than in other locations.

A show of hands indicated that many members would find the Remembrance Sunday date difficult.

NP: Earl of Stamford have already agreed to host in 2020 but perhaps they and Theale Tattoo could swap years.

JS and LS will be away on November 17th and 24th 2019.

JC will go back to Theale Tattoo to discuss this and discuss with EoS if necessary.

Action: JC and NP to arrange date of 2019 AGM.

Note from 27/11/18 – the date of the next AGM has been agreed as 3/11/19 and will be hosted by Theale Tattoo in Berkshire.

20. Close of AGM

NP offered thanks to Bedcote for the food, workshop and general arrangements, to NW as departing secretary, to Lucy Wilkins for taking the minutes, to Gill Willson for presenting the Sue Dyke Award and welcomed JC as new secretary.

Meeting closed at 17.02.

Appendix 2 - Chair's Report

Chair's Report 2019

As my tenure as Chair draws to a close after almost four years, I can look back with satisfaction at the progress Open Morris has made since I took up the post in January 2016. From a period of suspicion, mistrust and falling member numbers, we have emerged stronger, with consistently increasing numbers so that we are gradually approaching the membership levels we had pre-2016. The Officers have worked very well together this year with innovative suggestions being discussed and implemented eg how we present accounts and manage our finances; how members apply to renew membership or newcomers apply to join. Our website has been completely revamped and I urge you to visit it.

Our Sue Dyke Award competition, introduced last year, is slow to take off but I am hopeful that if all sides encourage their younger members to enter, entry numbers will blossom over the years. Last year's winner has wholeheartedly embraced morris and all it means – dancing with countless sides now, the length & breadth of the country, in many different styles and as a member of all three Morris Organisations. Surely the future of Morris?!

Some of you will know that my husband Doug died unexpectedly in June. Our sons and I decided to pass on half the funeral donations to Open Morris, to set up a memorial fund in his name. I hope this will be a resource to help fund equipment, particularly for new sides starting up. Doug was known for the morris sticks he cut from our woodland, de-barked and provided for various sides, so this will help to fill that gap!

My official duties this year have included attending various meetings in far-flung places: The JMO AGM near Nottingham, The Morris Ring ARM near Cannock and the Morris Federation AGM in Perth, Scotland. Unable to attend the Open Morris Annual Officials' Meeting in person, I was pleased to be able to attend very successfully via Skype. Apart from this, there has been the odd rumble regarding black face paint, involvement in a morris documentary but an otherwise quiet year.

The strong collaboration between the three Morris Organisations continues and I'm sure that will still be the case with our new Committee and the change of leadership in the Morris Federation. New faces mean new ideas and that is the way the Morris world will flourish. I would urge all members to consider becoming an Open Morris Officer or Area Rep to increase the diversity of ideas.

I would like to thank all my fellow Officers and Area Reps for their help and support this year and throughout my term as Chair. The Open Morris Committee is only as successful as the sum of its parts and I'm confident that this success and support will continue into the future. I wish my successor a happy and productive time as Chair.

Nicki Pickering

Open Morris Chair

Appendix 3 - Membership Secretary's Report



Membership Secretary's Report to the 2019 Annual General Meeting

Note – Information in this report is to the end of the Open Morris Financial Year, i.e. 31st August 2019, to accord with the Treasurer's Report.

Statistics at Year End (31st August 2019) – Membership Categories

Category	Current year, to 31/08/2019	Previous year, to 31/08/18
Adult sides	130	123
Non -UK sides	1	1
Associate Member sides	0	N/A
Junior sides	5	5
Total sides	136	129
Individual Members	13	12
Total	149	141

How people paid this year

Form of Payment	Current year, to 31/08/2019	Previous year, to 31/08/18
Standing Order	30	31
Bank Transfer	85	32
Cheques	34	77
Cash	0	1
Total	149	141

NB Please note the very welcome shift from cheques to bank Transfers, for which many thanks to those who changed their payment method.

We also received one subscription paid by recurring bank transfer – perhaps this means the days are numbered for standing orders. I'm waiting until next year to ensure it works!

The newly introduced membership category of “Associate Member” attracted no takers in this, its first year as a category.

Arrivals (13 No.)

We have welcomed:

- Brooms, Bricks and Bowlers (joined 13-Sep-2018)
- Far Side Morris, (joined 6-Nov-18)
- Beltane Border Morris (joined 14-Nov-18)
- Individual Member Sophie Watson (joined 23-Nov-18)
- Anderida Morris (joined 12-Dec-18)
- Norwich Pageantry Group (joined 20-Jan-19)
- Corby Conspiracy (joined 20-Jan-19)
- Scotch Mule Morris (joined 20-Jan-19)
- Individual Member Robin James (joined 22-Jan-19)
- The Magnificent Severn Morris (joined 8-Apr-19)
- Ad Hoc Morris (joined 9-Apr-19)
- So Xsighted Morris (joined 17-May-19)
- Shredded Feet (joined 5-Jul-19)

Departures who did not renew (4 No.)

Those who have, sadly, departed are:

- Eryri Morris (Taking time out. NB: theirs is the one less SO this year)
- Upton Occasional Morris (Now incorporated into Ledbury Morris)
- Individual Member Steve Tunnicliff (“lapsing as feet in Fed and Ring camps plus still in OM via Bunnies”)
- Buxey Morris (chose not to renew, assumed to have disbanded)

Uncertainties (1 No.)

Ten Lords Morris. They only come back to life in the autumn and so could still yet renew.

One very sad loss

Individual Member Doug Pickering (who died on 21st June 2019)

Renewal Process (largely form free)

This went very well – members were sent an email tailored to how they paid last time; previous cheque payers were encouraged to try direct transfers and many did. I did receive a small number of vintage Membership Renewal Forms with ‘2019’ over-written on historical examples.

We still maintain application forms for new members, which we send to each applicant because of the 'once only' sign off requirements.

It seems that everyone is happy with updating their OM database info via the weblink, insofar as many of our members have updated their details this way, plus no one contacted me to say they were unable to enter their data.

However, the simplest renewals were from those that just paid (quoting their member reference); I will make that a clear choice in the 2020 renewal reminders.

Emails that went astray

I have again received a trickle of emails regarding non-receipt of renewal confirmations (usually the one with PLI cover statement attached). These were mostly resolved by asking people to check their email spam traps. Perhaps emails with attachments are more vulnerable to pouncing spam hounds.

Appendix 4 - Secretary's Report



Secretary's Report to 2019 AGM

This year, I have represented OM at the JMO AGM, at The Morris Ring ARM, and recently had the great pleasure of attending the presentation of Steps in Time's Queen's Award for Voluntary Service. Steps in Time are a children's team, run by a dedicated and excellent group of volunteers, and the enthusiasm and skill of the young dancers is a great credit to their organisation, the event was a joy to attend.

I was proud to dance with Bunnies From Hell at the Manchester JMO DoD earlier in the year, and have enjoyed a busy season of dancing when family commitments have allowed.

As Secretary, I've been familiarising myself further with the web-based systems we use for OM communications. Within the organisation I was pleased to host our Annual Officials Meeting, in the summer, at my 'local', the Bell in Adderbury – 40 minutes away, but my spiritual Morris home! And I've hopefully discharged my duties in arranging the AGM to satisfaction.

I feel very fortunate to have had an excellent committee to work with in my first year as an OM Officer, and would like to thank everyone both within the Committee and the wider team for their camaraderie. I would also particularly like to thank Nicki Pickering, who is standing down as Chair at this AGM, for her great thoroughness, thoughtfulness, professionalism and dedication. Nicki took on the Chair role at a difficult time for Open Morris, and under her steady hand the organisation has flourished into the efficient, well organised and friendly group we are today. If I'm elected as Chair I hope I can do justice to the great work she has done.

Jen Cox

Secretary

Open Morris

Open Morris Web Officer Report

Web Site

1. Domain Names:
 - a. The domain name open-morris.org is registered to Open Morris with 123-reg.co.uk The domain is currently registered until 3 Jan 2020
 - b. The domain name jmodayofdance.com is registered to Joint Morris Organisations with 123-reg.co.uk. The domain is currently registered until 20 Nov 2020. The domain is paid for on behalf of the three morris organisations.
2. Hosting: The website and email facilities are currently hosted by Hills Associates, the trading name of Malcolm Hills. The annual cost for hosting is £50 per year. This is invoiced annually on 1 January. There are no limitations to storage capacity, bandwidth or email facilities.
3. Web Site
 - a. The website is built on the Wordpress CMS platform using a premium professional theme (Enfold). Open Morris has purchased a lifetime single site licence for Enfold
 - b. The Web Site is designed to provide as much information as possible for members and the public. All of Open Morris Documents are available for viewing online and can be downloaded for offline viewing.
 - c. Membership Renewal will as far as possible this year be undertaken online. Each Member will be able to check the details we hold and amend where necessary. Membership Payment will still need to be done either by Cheque by post, Standing Order or Direct Bank Transfer. Full details will be included in the Renewal Emails.
4. Usage: The website attracts approximately 75,000 page hits per month. Full detailed statistics are available on request.
5. Ongoing Problems
 - a. Email. Providing an email service that can be used by a small number of people i.e. the committee members and also providing mass mailing functions to our membership will always be difficult. Sending mail to a large number of recipients and forwarding to personal email addresses is always likely to attract attention and occasional blacklisting. This is an ongoing problem that is monitored closely.

For this reason we ask all members to provide an alternative email contact address in case the primary address can't be reached.

- b. The site is large and complex and sometimes things don't quite work, particularly with the numerous varied devices and browsers now available. Often the only way to know that something is broken is to be told by the users. Please do not hesitate to let me know if anything is not behaving the way you think it should.
6. Side Details and Photos: Each member side has its own Side Page. A brief resumé and photographs can easily be added to this page. The page also includes details of your practice times and venue (where provided). It is important therefore to keep us up to date with any changes. If you would like a resumé and photographs added then please send them to me at web@open-morris.org
7. Events Calendar; The web site includes an Events Calendar which is currently used to highlight a small number of "national events". If you would like to use this space to advertise your events or dance-outs then please send the details to web@open-morris.org I will also look at publishing member events on the Side page as well as the Events Pages.
8. Finally, whilst I might be technically competent to maintain our web presence, I am not particularly creative; I am therefore more than happy to receive criticism and suggestions to make it easier to use.

Malcolm Hills Web Officer

web@open-morris.org

Appendix 6 - Treasurer's Report

Open Morris Treasurer's Report 2018-19

This is my second year as Treasurer, so this is the second set of accounts I have produced for the AGM. I have again this year adjusted the expenditure headings so that it is clearer how much various activities have actually cost.

Once again, I have included the full accounts to show detailed income and expenditure, see Appendix 1

Expenditure

The total expenditure in 2018-9, £2,512.45, is about half the total expenditure in the previous year, £5010.11. As may be seen from the accounts almost half the difference, £1023.34, is because no issues of the magazine Dancing On were published during the year.

The budget headings have been adjusted between the two sets of accounts which is why the Officers Expenses heading is so much lower. Even so the main meetings, the Annual Officers Meeting (AOM), the Annual general Meeting (AGM) and participation in the JMO day of dance all cost less in 2018-19, £745.76 less between them. In May 2018 the AOM was linked to the JMO day of dance which was organized by Open Morris and did incur additional costs, including an overnight stay for Officers.

Income

As may be seen from Appendix 2 this year we are able to balance the income expected from the membership with the actual income shown in the accounts. Although the membership has increased by a net 7 adult sides and 1 individual, £252 of additional income, this is not reflected in the amounts shown as subscription income in the accounts as compared to last year. Last year there were more refunds and 10 sides and 1 individual that paid the full subscription rate because of late payment, unlike this year where all payments were made on time.

In addition to the subscription income there were 2 £10 subscription overpayments given as donations and a significant donation of £250 in memory of Doug Pickering. As members will be aware Doug, a very long-standing member and active supporter

of Open Morris, died suddenly in June this year. The donations from his funeral have been very generously given to Open Morris to set up a fund in his memory.

Financial Out-turn

The amount shown in the accounts at year end, £15,226.71 including the balance of the Sue Dyke Donation, matches the amount in the bank on 31st August 2019 and the Independent Reviewer has signed off the accounts, See Appendices 3 and 4 of this report.

In the financial year to 31st August 2019 there was a surplus of £2,518.55.

Level of Financial Reserves

Excluding the balance of the Sue Duke donation and the Doug Pickering donation, the Open Morris bank balance stands at £14,542.56. There has never been a policy decision about how much money should be kept in reserve and therefore how much is potentially available for initiatives.

Advice has been sought from the Independent Financial Reviewer about how much Open Morris should prudently keep in reserve. The Morris Federation has about 2.8 x annual income as a reserve and the Morris Ring has substantially more. The Independent Reviewer said that a small business would normally aim for 2-3 x annual income as reserve.

The Open Morris income, excluding donations, for 2018-19 was £4,761.00. A reserve of 2.8 x income would be £13,330.80, giving £1,211.76 available for initiatives.

The AGM might decide that this is too high a reserve and aim for the lower end of the recommended range, 2 x income, which would be £9,522, allowing £5020.56 over.

Given the reasons for the surplus this year, particularly the lack of Dancing On publications, it is unlikely that such a big surplus will be achieved in subsequent years. Open Morris is breaking even but without significant additional membership, it is likely there will be no significant surpluses in years to come. Any money available over the reserve should only be used on one-off initiatives rather than recurring expenditure.

The Treasurer recommends that the AGM adopts the policy of 2 x annual income as a reserve and allocate a fund of £5000 for possible initiatives.

Subscription Rates for 2019-20

Given the financial outturn above and the level of reserve proposed above, it is recommended the subscription levels for UK members remain the same.

It had been proposed that any surplus funds could be used to reduce the subscription rates, but a £10 reduction would potentially cost over £1300 per annum. The available money, £5000, would last less than 4 years. It is unlikely that such a reduction would attract many additional members.

The recommended rate table is shown below:

Membership Category	Rate
Adult side 'Early Bird' rate	£35.00
Adult side full rate	£45.00
Junior side 'Early Bird' rate	£15.00
Junior side full rate	£25.00
Individual 'Early Bird' rate	£7.00
Individual full rate	£17.00
Overseas side 'Early Bird' rate	£25.00
Associate side "Early Bird" rate	£25.00
Overseas side full rate	£35.00
Associate side full rate	£35.00

Appendix 2

Open Morris Membership Income for Financial Year 2018-19			
Type	Number	Rate	Income
Early Bird Adult	130	£35.00	£4,550.00
Full Adult	0	£45.00	£0
Early Bird Junior	5	£15.00	£75.00
Full Junior	0	£25.00	£0
Early Bird Individual	13	£7.00	£91.00
Full Individual	0	£17.00	£0
Early Bird Associate	0	£25.00	£0
Full Associate	0	£35.00	£0
Early Bird Non-UK	1	£25.00	£25.00
Full Non-UK	0	£35.00	£0
Total			£4,741.00
Subscription income shown in accounts			£4,761.00
Subscription overpayment refunds			£20.00
Net subscriptions from the accounts			£4,741.00

NB: There was also a reimbursement of subscription to Crosskey Clog for hosting the 2018 Day of Dance as agreed at the AGM.

OPEN MORRIS

 Sort Code 20-17-19
 Account No 23963586

SWIFTBIC BUKGB22

IBAN GB90 BUKB 2017 1923 9635 86

Issued on 02 September 2019

 THE OFFICIALS
 OPEN MORRIS
 7 REDLEAF CLOSE
 TUNBRIDGE WELLS
 TN2 3UD


Your Community Account

At a glance

Date	Description	Money out £	Money in £	Balance £
1 Aug	Start Balance			15,156.71
16 Aug	 On-Line Banking Bill Payment to Dr N R Heinersdorf Ref: Expenses	180.00		14,976.71
29 Aug	 Direct Credit From Nicoletta Heinersd Ref: Doug P Mem Fund		250.00	15,226.71
30 Aug	Balance carried forward			15,226.71
Total Payments/Receipts		180.00	250.00	

01 - 30 Aug 2019

Start balance	£15,156.71
Money out	£180.00
▶ Commission charges	£0.00
Money in	£250.00
▶ Gross interest earned	£0.00
End balance	£15,226.71

Your deposit is eligible for protection by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme.

Anything wrong? If you notice any incorrect or unusual transactions, see the next page for how to get in touch with us.

Barwick Green

28 The Glade
Fetcham
Surrey KT22 9TH

Tel 01372 454024
e-mail morris@Barwick-Green.co.uk

23rd September 2019

INDEPENDENT REVIEWER'S REPORT

As the Open Morris appointed Independent Reviewer, I attach my report on the accounts, as prepared for the 12 month period ended 31 August 2019.

The accounts reviewed consist of a Financial Statement and accompanying detailed records consisting of bank statements, spreadsheets and paper copies of expenses and claims.

As an Association and with a low income, Open Morris is not required to submit accounts for a full audit by an accountant. The Open Morris Constitution now uses the term "Independent Reviewer" to describe the role of the person who reviews the accounts for irregularities, on behalf of the membership.

INDEPENDENT REVIEWER'S STATEMENT 2019

This statement is based on my examination and review of the accounting records kept by Open Morris and a comparison with the Statement presented with those records.

My review also included consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations. The procedures undertaken do not cover all the original documentation that would be required in an 'Audit' and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a "true and fair view" of the activities of Open Morris and the report is limited to the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

Following my examination:

- a) No matter has come to my attention which gives me cause to believe that the accounting records have not been kept in accordance with the requirements of Open Morris and UK accounting principles.
- b) No matters have come to my attention which would require further examination to enable a proper full understanding of Open Morris's Statement and Accounts.



Open Morris AGM 2019 – Officials' Reports

Editor of Dancing On! – Jen Cox

I'm sorry to report that there has been no magazine published in the time since the last AGM. Unfortunately I have had several relatives fall seriously ill during this time, which has left me short of time for the magazine, and prioritising other duties. I'm pleased to report however that the next magazine is in production and will be with you all very shortly!

As you can see elsewhere in the AGM materials, I'll be moving away from the magazine, but will still be able to keep a guiding hand and an active role. I'm excited to be handing over the reins to a young talent, to whom I wish all the fun the magazine has brought me, and all the luck in the world.

Area Representatives

West Midlands – Craig Simmonds

Over the past year I have received a couple of enquiries from new sides looking to get started in the area and have answered any queries as best as I can!

Generally it has been a fairly quiet year here In the west midlands - things have been ticking over nicely.

Wales & North-West - Nicki Pickering

Welsh sides are not in a very good place at the moment, certainly in the north of the principality. Of the 2 sides in the north, Eryri did very little last year due to low numbers, increasing age & injuries. They eventually admitted defeat when the time came to renew membership this year. As a co-founder of the side in 1982, this was very sad for me to see, compounded by Cadi Ha, also a side I co-founded in 2010, struggling for members at the moment. Without these 2 sides, the local area would be without a Cotswold (or indeed any) morris side for the first time since the mid 1960s.

Things are much more rosy in the Northwest with 14 sides including some new or newish ones and a good mixture of most styles of morris. I'm hoping that many of those will be keen to attend the JMO Day of Dance in Liverpool next year.

So, if any of you have friends moving to Northwest Wales, please send them along to Cadi Ha and keep morris alive in the area!

East Anglia – Robin James

No complaints or queries received to follow up.

The team (FM) have interacted with many East Anglian teams including the Ring and Morris Federation at pub nights, Days of Dance and Weekends of Dance.

We also get involved with teams in Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire, Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex on an annual basis.

As a steward at a number of folk festivals across the country I take the opportunity to distribute the Open Morris flyer.

Central – Jen Cox

It's been a good year in our area, and I'm pleased to report that of the 5 OM sides I belong to in my area, 4 have new members this season, which is a brilliant boost to an already very active area. Our new folks are all progressing well and getting set to dance out for the first time, I'd like to wish them all luck and welcome them warmly into their new teams!

Many OM teams danced at Wallingford BunkFest, the festival for which I organise the dance events, and I was very pleased to welcome OM teams from other areas to the festival, some for the first time.

Central South – Clare Mach

Unfortunately, it has been a rather inactive year as I try and juggle my new role with other commitments. I have met the two other sides on the mainland who continue their fairly low-key performances. Plans to visit the sides on the Isle of Wight were scuppered when my own side, Devil's Jumps Clog's, lead musician unexpectedly died in early July. We immediately cancelled all forthcoming dance outs, including our trip to the Isle of Wight whilst we sorted out our music – an ongoing process.

I wish all sides in my area a successful 2020.

Appendix 8 - Motion Documents

ORDINARY MOTION 1: Outgoing Officers

Amend the Terms of Reference and Roles Para 1 to read:

1) THE OFFICERS OF OM

a) will take over their roles with immediate effect after their election at AGM. A six week transitional phase may be used for the outgoing Officer to assist the new Officer, if requested by the new Officer.

Current text

1) THE OFFICERS OF OM:

a) will take over their roles six weeks after their election at AGM, with the six week period being a shared transition phase for the outgoing Officer to assist the new Officer to take over the role.

Explanatory note:

It is not always possible for an outgoing Officer to maintain their role after their retirement eg due to ill health, personal circumstances or even death. Having a discretionary period for the newly elected Officer to have help if needed, allows for mentoring if necessary, and makes clear that the Office lies immediately with the newly elected Officer.

ORDINARY MOTION 2: Chair's role within the JMOs

Amend the Terms of Reference and Roles, Para 2.g to reflect changes in the JMO Constitution

2. g)) assume the role of Chair of the JMOs in rotation, organising the JMO AGM and usually overseeing the JMO National Day of Dance in that year.

Current text

g) assume the role of Chair of the JMOs tri-annually, organising the JMO AGM and overseeing the JMO National Day of Dance in that year.

Explanatory note:

The JMO Constitution is currently under revision with the previously defined tri-annual rotation being made more flexible to allow for exceptional circumstances. The Committee propose that the Open Morris documents should reflect this change

CONSTITUTION MOTION 1: Define Junior Membership

Amend the Constitution to read:

In Para 3 Membership add:

3) MEMBERSHIP

f) Junior Sides are those where the majority of members are aged 18 or under. They benefit from a lower subscription rate and are covered by OM Public Liability Insurance

Current text:

No definition is included

Explanatory note

Although this has not been a problem, the Committee feel that it is wise to clearly define 'Junior Sides'.