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Chief Executive: Dr David Lambert

## **(UNCONFIRMED) MINUTES OF THE 2008 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The Annual General Meeting of the Geographical Association was held on Thursday 27 March 2008 at 3.30 pm in room 32 MS.01 of the Management School, University of Surrey, Guildford.

**PRESENT:** John Westaway (President, Chairing the AGM)  
Peter Fox (Named Trustee, standing in for the absent Honorary Treasurer)  
Professor David Lambert (Chief Executive)  
Thirty eight other people signed the attendance register (see full list of attendees at the end of these minutes)  
In attendance: Richard Gill (GA Business Manager - taking the minutes)

**APOLOGIES:** Apologies for absence had been received from Brian Ellis (Honorary Treasurer), Richard Daugherty, Norman Graves, Wendy Morgan, Sheila Morris, Alan Patmore and Richard Dilley

### **1 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Geographical Association held on 12 April 2007 were taken as read and unanimously approved by the meeting. President John Westaway agreed to sign a set of the minutes as a true record of the meeting.

### **2 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

It was noted at last year's AGM that no nominations had been received for the office of Honorary Treasurer/Named Trustee, 2007-10. The meeting had therefore resolved that the Presidents' Group be delegated to address this situation. During summer 2007 Mr Brian Ellis was approached and subsequently agreed to assume this position. The meeting ratified Brian Ellis as Honorary Treasurer/named Trustee, 2007-10 (Prop: Peter Fox; Sec: Neil Simmonds, carried *nem con*).

### **3 REPORTS**

The following reports were made to the meeting:

#### President's Report

John Westaway started his report by offering thanks to the GA's staff, committee members and other volunteers for their invaluable contributions to the work of the Geographical Association. The past year had been one of change, in part attributable to David Lambert stepping down from a full time CE role to a 0.50 one and being supported in this process by the appointment of John Lyon to a new full time Programme Director position. In particular

he had been impressed by the range and breadth of the GA's activities, which is something that had become even more apparent to him since assuming the role of Chair of the GA's Governing Body in September 2007. The main highlights of the year were noted as follows:

- i. The successes achieved under the DCSF funded Action Plan for Geography (2006-08), which had played a major part in laying the foundations for the expected continuation of this important work under new proposals for continuation Action Plan work over the period 2008-11.
  - ii. The increased influence that the GA has been able to exert in relation to curriculum developments e.g. in supporting the new KS3 curriculum (in collaboration with a number of other subject associations and CfBT Education Trust) and also in terms of development of the new GCSE syllabuses.
  - iii. The enhancement of the GA's reputation as a high quality provider of teacher CPD, subject leadership and curriculum innovation.
  - iv. The formation of the new Council for Subject Associations (CfSA), which promises to ensure that the collective voice of subject associations will be heard where appropriate.
- He then went on to issue a challenge to the GA to start to focus more on wider educational priorities, in addition to those of geography subject leaders, and in particular to try to find ways of engaging with the key decision makers within schools. He concluded his report by providing the meeting with advance notice that the GA's Statutes and Standing Orders would be reviewed during 2008 and that this exercise would include a proposal to increase the maximum number of Honorary Vice Presidents (HVP) from three to five. It was noted at this point that Doreen Massey had agreed to replace Andrew Goudie (who was stepping down at the end of his 3-year term) as one of the GA's three HVP's.

#### Chief Executive's Report

David Lambert explained to the meeting the enormous significance of the work undertaken by the GA as part of the first phase of the Action Plan for Geography (APG), under which virtually every target had been achieved. Furthermore, it had provided a vehicle for demonstrating the GA's excellent working relationship with the RGS-IBG, as evidenced by the Early Career Teacher joint membership offering and a new reciprocal 'add-on' membership proposal involving the GA's Quality Mark accreditation and the RGS's Chartered geographer (Teacher) status. That so much had been achieved was a tribute to all of those in the APG team but in particular to Di Swift (who has since stepped down from her involvement with the project), who was thanked for her tremendous energy during the vitally important early stages of the project. He went on to thank the trustees for allowing him to step away from his previous full time CE role to take up a 0.50 professorship at the Institute of Education, University of London. The year under review had certainly been a very busy one for the GA but beneath the raft of new project activities there had been a definite process of consolidation of the GA as a provider of quality CPD. Other highlights brought to the attention of the meeting included the following:

- i. The continued development of the TDA-funded GTIP website.
  - ii. The launch of the Learning Outside the Classroom Manifesto.
  - iii. The work undertaken in preparation of the re-launch of the *Geography* journal
- He concluded his report by explaining to the meeting that the consolidation of project activity had been reflected in a recent decision to advertise for two new full time project leadership posts, which represented an important moment of change for the GA that involved 'third stream' projects becoming a 'core' organisation activity to be viewed in the same way as membership and publications.

#### Honorary Treasurer's Report

Peter Fox offered apologies to the meeting on behalf Honorary Treasurer, Brian Ellis, who it was noted had taken up an opportunity to travel to Australia. He also thanked Richard Gill for his work in managing and reporting on the organisations finances during the year under review. He brought the meeting's attention to the accounts information contained on pages 11-15 of the Annual Report and summarised the information contained therein to the following key points:

- i. Income exceeded expenditure by about £106K but just over half of this was already reserved for future payments related to the APG project.
- ii. The actual underlying operational surplus for 2007-08 was not dissimilar to that for 2006-07, but is welcome as it is the fourth successive year of surplus.
- iii. The single most important increase in income was from Special Project (APG plus others) – up from £385K in 2006-07 to £893K in 2007-08, equating to just over 52% of the GA's total income.
- iv. There were falls in income from Subscriptions and Publications, which accounted for approximately 20% and 14% respectively.
- v. The most significant increase in expenditure was accounted for by the running costs, including staffing, of APG and other projects but it was noted that these projects were self-financing and also contributed to the existing overheads associated with running the GA's offices and its support staff.
- vi. Solly Street running costs were very close to budget, but there was the one-off cost in the year for office refurbishment one very positive outcome of which was the new Patrick Bailey meeting room.
- vii. Overall the Balance Sheet was noted as being reasonably robust, with £1,124K Net Assets.

He concluded his report by drawing the meeting's attention to some of the risks facing the GA going forward, which included the continued year-on-year fall in member numbers, the increased dependence upon project income and the challenges relating to the growth of electronic resources vis-a-vis hard copy publications. In response to a question from Neil Simmonds, Peter Fox explained to the meeting the basis on which the GA had entered into a new lease in respect of its current premises at 160 Solly Street, Sheffield i.e. on a new 10-year term but with exit options after 5 and 7 years and with a reduced annual rental due to occupancy of only two of the building's three floors.

#### 4 ADOPTION OF THE ANNUAL REPORT

Submitted: Annual Report for the year ended 31 August 2007

Resolved: That the Geographical Association Annual Report for the year ended 31 August 2007 be adopted. (Prop: Angus Wilson, Sec: Simon Catling, carried *nem con*)

#### 5 SUBSCRIPTION RATES 2008-2009

Submitted: Proposed membership rates for year 1 Sep 08 to 31 Aug 09

Peter Fox submitted new membership rates, which had, in accordance with Statutes 4 and 20 (iii), been determined by the Governing Body on 8 March 2008 for submission to the AGM for approval. The proposed new rates represented an increase of approximately 2.5% over the prior year. Also included was provision for continuation of the discount offered to GA members paying their subscription by Direct Debit (introduced last year), such that they would pay the published 2007-08 rates.

Resolved: That the subscription rates for 2008-09 determined by the Governing Body be adopted. (Prop: John Westaway; Sec: Bill Meades, carried *nem con*)

#### 6 INTRODUCTION OF PRESIDENT FOR 2008-09

The President introduced his successor, Margaret Roberts, who will be President of the GA from 1 September 2008 to 31 August 2009. It was noted that Margaret had started her school geography career in Bristol, following her graduation from Cambridge and completing her PGCE at the Institute of Education in London. Her teaching career had also taken her to Leicester and Sheffield, with her most recent role being as the coordinator of the Geography PGCE course at the University of Sheffield. She was also been an extremely active member of the GA with recent experience of being Honorary Editor of *Teaching Geography* and also having played a key role on a number of the GA's volunteer committees e.g. the Teacher

Educators Working Group, Education Committee and also over the past year two on the Governing Body in her capacity as Junior Vice President and Senior Vice President.

#### 7 ELECTION OF OFFICERS

(i) It was noted that John Hopkin had been elected, following a close run ballot between Ian Selmes and John Hopkin, to become Junior Vice President 2008-09, then Senior VP 2009-10 and President 2010-11.

(ii) Jeremy Krause was elected unopposed to the position of Named Trustee 2008-2014.

(iii) Mark Higginbottom and Helen Martin were also elected unopposed as the two Elected Members of Governing Body 2008-11.

#### 8 APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS FOR 2008-09

PKF (UK) LLP was reappointed as Auditors for 2008-09 (Prop: Peter Fox; Sec: Trevor Bennetts, carried *nem con*).

#### 9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(i) Journal Editors: the meeting approved the appointments of Mary Biddulph as Honorary Editor of *Teaching Geography* 2008-11 and Fran Martin as Honorary Editor of *Primary Geographer* 2008-11.

(ii) Branches: the formal affiliations of the following new or re-launched branches were noted by the meeting – Barking Abbey, Shropshire, Hertfordshire, Oxford and Sheffield.

(iii) Obituaries: the meeting was made aware of sad the deaths of the following former prominent members of the GA – Lord Nathan (19 July 2007), Professor W G V Balchin (30 July 2007), Professor M B Gleave (19 September 2007) and Alan Marriott (9 October 2007).

#### 10 VOTES OF THANKS

The President, John Westaway thanked those Officers retiring in August 2008 and in particular Keith Grimwade (out-going Past President) and Trevor Bennetts (retiring Named Trustee) who had both made major contributions to the careful stewardship of the GA over many years. Thanks were also extended to the following individuals who had or were soon to retire their volunteer GA posts - Kenny Lynch (editor of *Geography*), Margaret Roberts (editor of *Teaching Geography*), Elaine Jackson (chair of the Early Years & Primary Phase Committee), Alan Kinder and Sarah Watts (joint chairs of the Secondary Phase Committee), Maggie Smith (chair of Environmental & Sustainable Education Working Group), Rob Lodge (member of the Secondary Phase Committee) and Tony Thomas OBE (chair of the old Field Studies Working Group).

#### 11 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The President announced that the next AGM would be held during the GA Annual Conference at the University of Manchester, 16-18 April 2009.

12 The meeting closed at 4.15 pm.

LIST OF MEMBERS WHO SIGNED THE 2008 AGM REGISTER OF ATTENDANCE

1. Niki Whitburn
2. Paul Baker
3. Helen Martin
4. Rachel Bowles
5. Neil Simmonds
6. Kate Russell
7. Paula Owens
8. Steve Brace
9. Nicky Reckless
10. Wendy North
11. Sheila Bradford
12. Michael Bradford
13. Mark Higginbottom
14. Paula Richardson
15. John Hopkin
16. John Lyon
17. Bill Meades
18. Simon Catling
19. Mick Dawson
20. Margaret Roberts
21. Roger Nash
22. Urszula Basini
23. Pat Cleverley
24. Sheila Jones
25. John Morris
26. Russell Feaver
27. Sue Lomas
28. Trevor Bennetts
29. John Halocha
30. Justin Woolliscroft
31. Ruth Totterdell
32. Bob Jones
33. Rob Morris
34. Keith Grimwade
35. David Narracott
36. Jeremy Krause
37. June Robinson
38. Sophie MacDowell
39. Peter Fox
40. John Westaway