



Registered Charity No. 1172445

The 6th Annual General Meeting of The Devon and Exeter Institution Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) held Thursday 20th October 2022 at 2:00 p.m at The Guildhall (being also the 33rd Annual Meeting of the Devon and Exeter Charitable Association and 209th Annual Meeting of the Institution since its formation).

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

1. Apologies were received from 25 and 36 members, 5 staff and 5 trustees were in attendance.

2. Introductory remarks from John Reeves, Chair of the Board of Trustees, JR introduced Richard Templeton, Honorary Treasurer and Ruth O'Neale Honorary Secretary. He declared the meeting was quorate.

“A very warm welcome ladies and gentlemen to this 6th AGM of the DEI CIO. It is also the 209th since the DEI was founded and the 33rd of the charitable association. I would particularly like to welcome any new members who have joined as members since the last AGM. This is my second AGM as Chair of Trustees and my fifth as Trustee. On a personal note it is lovely to see so many long standing friends of the institution here today.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees I would like to thank our members for supporting our charity this year. We have continued to focus on improving our revenue, recruiting new members and supporters through venue hire and our events programme. I would like to thank our Trustees, Director and staff and also our volunteer teams for all their work put in to ensure the DEI is run sustainably and meeting its charitable aims of preserving our heritage building and collections and delivering public education.

Two of our Trustees have come to the end of their term of office today, Sandra Bond and Christopher Chanter. I would like to thank them both for all their support and work put in during their five years as Trustees of the CIO. Also, during the year Charlotte Easton resigned as a Trustee. We are pleased that all three will continue to be involved as volunteers and members. Similarly, Emma Laws left us to work as the Cathedral Librarian but continues to work for us as a consultant and is a member and supporter.

During this reporting period a major grant from the NLHF was confirmed and our Next Chapter Project is now well underway. We will soon be starting the capital works to enhance our welcome, improve access, upgrade heating and toilets and open up for better use our front rooms and garden areas. We have an enhanced activities programme which will include events for Exeter City of Literature. We will be delivering essential conservation works, a collection review and the development of a long term research strategy.

I would like to thank the NLHF and lottery players for this significant £1m further investment in the institution. We would also like to thank the Garfield Weston Foundation for their investment in “Our Region Revealed” project digitising DEI illustrations collection. Also the Humanities Research Council for investment in our partnership with the University of Exeter.

Turning to own fundraising, in June we launched our “Light on the Green” appeal. You will remember that in 2017 our two large library roof lanterns were reclad in their original covering of copper. We now wish to restore the small front cupola in the upper reading room in copper and reopen it so the only lantern visible from the cathedral green will once again light up the beautiful skyline. It will also allow light to stream into our

first floor when the partition is removed. We would like to thank members who have already pledged or donated to this.

We hope that all members and supporters will get involved demonstrating the usual “institution spirit” by giving financial support to this fundraiser. Please give to this appeal if you have not already done so. All contributions are important to us. It is a major appeal and is part of our match funding, Ceri is the person at the back of the room who can take donations today,

During this reporting period we made significant improvements in the way we lead, managed run our heritage site, programmes and collections, guided by a number of things; our strategic vision, our forward plan, and a series of specialist reports including a Quinquennial review process to guide building maintenance, a Conservation Management Plan and some additional ethical guidance documents to inform our work as a charity,

Thinking now about the year ahead. We face significant challenges due to current economic conditions, in particular running costs. We have secured a major grant but this is a restricted fund. We have to manage risks to our charity. We must focus on raising revenue to maintain our operations and charitable cause. I hope that members will support us with this through membership and participation but also by being advocates for the institution. Please keep telling your friends about our free public tours on a Wednesday afternoon. Tell them about our beautiful Regency library with its fascinating collection and interesting activities programme happening in a very special heritage setting, 7 Cathedral Close! Thank you,

3. Approval of the Minutes of the AGM held on 21st October 2021. Jane Evans proposed the minutes be approved and Pamela Wootton seconded the motion and all members present voted to agree.

4. Matters arising. None raised.

5. Hon. Secretary: Annual Report and Review, Ruth O’Neale shared the following update;

“We ended the reporting period with a membership of 605, and we now stand at 620, which is increase of 100 from the Spring of 2021, following the last lockdown period.

Although we have yet to recover to our previous high, we are seeing more people participating in initiatives such as Heritage Open Week, our workshops, and events and in our public tours, which are the main ways we attract new members.

We are not expecting much growth in membership this year, due to the capital works which will be taking place. We hope that those who can, will continue to support the charity through this period of development.

We thank our volunteer membership secretaries for maintaining our membership systems over the past year and to our staff and volunteers for making the DEI an inviting place to join.

Just as new people join us, so some must leave us and we would like to take a moment to remember the following members who have died this year.

Roger Yeates

Brian Clarkson

Julian Nowill – former Hon Treasurer

Nicholas Bull

Brian Le Messurier

VJM Bridges

Peter Fender

Tony Watts

Jeremy White

Brian Le Messurier left a legacy gift of the sales of his personal book collection, which has raised around 3k for the Institution so far.

There have also been many positive news stories this year:

We welcomed three new members of staff to the Institution:

Sonia Llewellyn as Librarian
Karen Cunningham as Project and Programme Officer and
Bethany Howell as Collections and Research Assistant

The Institution also welcomed Amber Flood, as our first Collaborative Doctoral Student. Amber will be with us for three years and is researching 'The Enlightenment Library in an era of rapid social change'. Do give her the usual DEI welcome.

Institution member, Ingird Pollard has been nominated for the prestigious Turner Prize and the winner will be announced in a live television broadcast in December this year.

Young Member Anthony Jinny has secured a place at Bristol University and intern Sally Yann has secured a role at Kew as Quality Assurance Officer, working with digitised images of specimens, checking their standards and contributing to the digitisation of the Kew collection.

Beth Howell delivered a paper at May's Independent Libraries Association Conference: "But girls don't write books:" and Emma Dunn has given papers on 'Artists as Agents of Change' and 'Working with grant giving bodies' and has completed the Heritage Compass programme for Heritage leaders.

We have been nationally recognised for our Heritage Open Week offer and have appeared in a promotional film of the event, we have recently appeared in the Guardian newspaper and finally, earlier this year, Jisc Library Hub featured the DEI as their 'Library of the Week'."

6. Hon. Treasurer Richard Templeton talked through the report and presentation of the accounts for year ended 30 June 2022.

"This year we were subject to an audit of the accounts, instead of the usual independent examination, due to the NLHF grant bringing our income over £1,000,000.

The main areas I wish to draw to your attention are the restricted funds in relation to unrestricted income, the revaluation of assets (ie fine art and furniture) which has helped offset the reduced performance of the investment fund and the continued impact of the post pandemic economy.

In 2021/22 we benefited from emergency funding from the Heritage Emergency Fund and local authority Covid business interruption scheme, but post Covid we continue to suffer the impacts ie the reduced membership numbers and venue hire income, although we have recovered 100 members in this reporting period.

Our main sources of income are from membership, venue hire and grant giving bodies and post development, venue hire will play an increasingly important role".

6.1 Resolution: That the Independent Examiner's Report and Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 30 June 2022 is received by members. This was proposed by Richard Templeton and seconded by Judy Young and agreed via a vote from members present.

6.2 Resolution: That the Devon and Exeter Institution appoint Griffin Chartered Accountants as Independent Examiners of the accounts for 2022/23 financial year. This was proposed by Richard Templeton and seconded by Jane Evans and agreed via a vote from members present.

7. Reports from the Director and Librarian of the institution Emma Dunn and Sonia Llewellyn:

"ED

We have been fully open since May 2021, following the pandemic and we continue to feel its effects both financially and operationally.

Throughout this reporting period we have kept the purpose of our charity front of mind - which is to 'preserve and educate.'

We are responsible for caring for 7 Cathedral Close and a collection of heritage books, furniture, fine and decorative art, housed in their original setting and we endeavour to support learning in all its forms by making our heritage accessible and relevant to our community of members, supporters, and visitors. Everything we do as a staff team, is guided by this cause and our charity business plan reflects this.

In this reporting year we have secured Round Two funding of £814,000 from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, which, with the grant awarded in the last financial year, is a total project grant of £1m.

We have welcomed three new members of staff, including Librarian, Sonia Llewellyn, Collections and Research Assistant, Bethany Howell, and Project Officer, Karen Cunningham. We continue to work with Emma Laws as a specialist consultant and in partnership, in her new role as Cathedral Librarian.

We have established a new programme of events to reach out to a wider range of people and to aid our pandemic recovery and have begun a collection review in order to develop a research strategy. We have taken our capital works from RIBA 2 (concept) to RIBA 4 (technical design) with a team of architects, engineers, archaeologists, and other specialist consultants. The capital works have been tendered over the summer and we are now in the process of reviewing and appointing contractors.

SL

During this reporting period, our former Librarian Emma Laws introduced a bookable research service in the Inner Library and due to its success, we will continue to operate a bookable service going forward. Research appointments mean our members and visitors are guaranteed a reserved seat in the Inner Library and staff can consult with members about their research interests and suggest relevant items from the collection. This also helps us to ensure that books are handled with care and returned to their original positions.

In November last year we became a member library of JISC. Our book collections are now searchable on JISC Library Hub Discover – a searchable web interface which brings together the collections of research libraries across the UK. This means that people all over the world can discover the DEI and our collections.

Book displays have included 'Well-met by moonlight', highlighting early scientific and astronomical works, to tie in with Luke Jerram's Museum of the Moon at Exeter Cathedral, as well as 'A ballad of reading' in which we have explored connections to LGBTQ+ histories within our collections.

As part of our conservation fundraising, members of the public are able to 'adopt a book'. Money raised through this programme feeds directly into caring for our collections, ensuring they are accessible to future generations. The name of the adopter then appears on a bookplate, and they become a part of the history of the DEI. Members also made donations towards conservation on all ten books in our 'rescue a book' scheme for the last year, paying for crucial restoration work to be carried out by a book binder.

To make them more accessible to researchers, Library Volunteers listed a total of 1,956 Ordnance Survey maps. They also stock checked 5,450 books in the South West collection, to ensure that they were available to researchers. After volunteering in the DEI Library to gain experience, one Library Volunteer was able to secure a role in the University of Leeds library.

From March to the end of the financial year, we have donated the sales from our popular Book Trolley to Odessa National Scientific Library in Ukraine.

ED

Our 'Community Culture' lecture season began in the Autumn of 2021, and we welcomed a diverse range of speakers to explore communities in and around the DEI, past, present, and future. Beginning with Professor Helen Berry, who spoke on 'The curious history of the English coffee house' and concluding with Dr Robin Wootton, who spoke on 'Beginnings and biology in the DEI. The legacies of William Elford Leach.'

In this reporting period, our public tours, Reading Group, Cinema Club and West Quarter Research Group resumed in-person events, and we celebrated Heritage Open Week last September, which was themed Edible England. We offered tours to over 120 people, many of whom had not previously known that we existed; the Saturday team provided edible flowers workshops and the library team presented a display of early cookery books in the Outer Library, co-curated by library volunteers. Public engagement workshops, events and talks resumed on Saturdays, and we piloted some early evening events.

In Spring this year, we welcomed the team from Exeter UNESCO City of Literature to share our office space one day per week, ensuring our partnership can develop seamlessly. We have delivered several literary collaborative events, with many more planned for the coming year.

SL

At the end of phase one of our digitisation project, Our Region Revealed, we have scanned and created inventory records for about 1,300 prints and drawings. They are accessible via our online collections' explorer – there is a link from the library page on our website.

In phase two of our project and thanks to an additional investment by the Garfield Weston Foundation, we are continuing to invite our members and volunteers to participate in the documentation of our collections. New Prints and Drawings volunteers are carrying out research and contributing their findings to our online descriptions. An “illustration of the week” is also made available on our social media channels, to increase opportunities for engagement and interpretation.

Where possible, digitised materials of particular interest are earmarked as material for education and outreach. In addition to the 1,300 prints and drawings digitised last year, the final sketchbook of Francis Stevens, along with working transcriptions, has been made available online. This has caught the attention of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, who are planning to feature our illustrations by Francis Stevens as part of their forthcoming show ‘Rich Man, Poor Man’ in Spring 2023.

ED

An important element in our financial recovery and strengthening the Institution against the current economic situations, is the development of partnership working. Partnerships enrich the institution by enabling the sharing of resources, expertise, volunteers, publicity and marketing, joint programming, training and development opportunities and partnership fundraising.

We continued to work closely with the University of Exeter, having contributed to several course modules online and at the beginning of the reporting period, presented an exhibition and lectures in collaboration with the School of Modern Languages on the theme of German Dreams and Dreamers and at the end of this reporting period, we hosted a collaborative display entitled Motherhood in Devon funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council.

We collaborated in a multi-partner research project and hosted Dr Ingrid Pollard, as our Research Partner and Artist in Residence. Ingrid’s show Three Drops of Blood, curated by Talking on Corners is currently showing at the Thelma Hulbert Gallery and we have our own outpost at the DEI where two pieces of her work are exhibited alongside a curated selection of books. We congratulate Ingrid on her recent nomination for the prestigious Turner Prize.

We were the co-applicant of a successful AHRC bid to fund a Collaborative Doctoral Award studentship, which will explore the history of the Enlightenment Library. Our research candidate – Amber - has joined our team and is familiarising herself with the archive.

Finally, our participation figures for projects, programmes, research appointments and partnerships, outreach, and volunteering are approaching pre-pandemic levels of c5000 individual engagements in this reporting period. Although we are again facing challenging times, this is tenfold increase in our participation figures of 2015, so the big picture remains a positive one.

Thank you for your support this year.”

8. Election of Trustees

John Reeves explained as there are two nominees standing for four vacant trustee posts there will not be a contested.

election. Names of the nominees are:

Hannah Jones for a three-year term

Her election was proposed by John Reeves, seconded by Paul Auchterlonie and agreed via a vote from all members present.

Shane Cormie for a re-election for a three-year term.

His election was proposed by Ruth O’Neale and seconded by Emma Laws and agreed via a vote from all members present.

9. Any other business

There were no questions raised but member Simon Timms wished the following to be noted when sending apologies: “I always find it such an uplifting experience to go into the DEI and see what is going on by way of taking it forward with the new project. And a few weeks ago, I went to the Thelma Hulbert Gallery at Honiton to see Ingrid Pollard’s exhibition and listen to her evening talk. She spoke so positively about the DEI and the inspiration she took from its collections and from spending time in the library. It was great to find DEI items on display in the upstairs archive room there; the ‘tree books’ are remarkable objects. This is just one example of the way the DEI is broadening horizons - to the benefit of widening audiences. I feel proud to be a member.”

As there were no further questions or comments John Reeves thanked all for attending and the meeting closed at 2.45pm.