



Historic Royal Palaces is the charity that looks after

**Tower of London**  
**Hampton Court Palace**  
**Banqueting House**  
**Kensington Palace**  
**Kew Palace**  
**Hillsborough Castle**

We help everyone explore the story of how monarchs and people have shaped society, in some of the greatest palaces ever built

We raise all our own funds and depend on the support of our visitors, members, donors, sponsors and volunteers.

## Minutes

Meeting name: **Board of Trustees**

Date of meeting: **Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2015**

Location: **The Tower of London**

Attendees: Rupert Gavin (Chairman)  
Dawn Austwick  
Bruce Carnegie-Brown  
Liz Cleaver  
Jane Kennedy  
Jonathan Marsden  
Mike Stevens  
Louise Wilson

Apologies: Sir David Cannadine  
Lord Dannatt  
Val Gooding  
Sir Trevor McDonald

In attendance: Michael Day - Chief Executive  
John Barnes - Conservation and Learning Director  
Richard Harrold - Tower Group Director (until item 7)  
Jane McKeown - Acting Finance Director  
Alyson Lawton - Trust and Company Secretary

For item 7 only  
Lucy Worsley - Chief Curator

### 1. Chairman's comments

1.1 Rupert Gavin noted that apologies had been received from Sir David Cannadine, Lord Dannatt, Val Gooding and Sir Trevor McDonald.

There were no conflicts of interests declared.

### 2. Minutes of the last meeting

2.1 The minutes for the meeting held on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2015 were approved.

### 3. Matters Arising

3.1 There were no matters arising.

### 4. Trustees Strategic Session – Summary of Conclusions

4.1 Michael Day outlined the conclusions from the Trustees Strategic Session, held the previous afternoon. These will be typed up and circulated. They would inform the thinking for this year's Strategic Plan and the revised Statement of Intent to 2025. Three further matters raised will be scheduled into future Trustees' meetings.



The Board congratulated the Chief Executive and the Executive Board for organising the session and for distilling yesterday's discussions into today's summary.

## 5. Monitoring Performance

### 5.1 Chief Executive's written reviews for August and September

#### 5.1.1 The Board noted the contents of the report. The Chief Executive drew attention to plans for the Gardens at Hampton Court Palace in 2016.

The Board was also pleased to approve an application to Arts Council England for the acceptance of a portrait of Sir Winston Churchill by the Belfast artist Sir John Lavery, for long term loan at Hillsborough Castle.

The Chairman noted the success of the installation of a new display at Kensington Palace celebrating the common themes across the longest reigns in the British Monarchy; Her Majesty The Queen and Queen Victoria. There had been good feedback from visitors.

The Chief Executive was also pleased to report the installation of the Reverend Anthony Howe as the new Chaplain at the Chapel Royal, Hampton Court Palace.

The Chairman also noted a second visit to the Tower of London by the Secretary of State for the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). The Secretary of State and three of his Ministers attended at a meeting organised by DCMS for all their Arms-Length Bodies in September.

Noting pressure on the budgets for the Magic Garden and Information Systems (IS) Programme, the Board asked whether there was any impact on delivery. The Chief Executive advised that there was no significant impact, clarifying that these were IS infrastructure projects not affecting the digital development programme. The Magic Garden would still be ready for its scheduled opening at Easter 2016.

### 5.2 Financial Performance to the end of August 2015

#### 5.2.1 The Board noted the Finance Director's report. Although visitors had been disappointing in August, the position had improved in September and we are tracking budget. A year-end forecast of income and expenditure is being prepared and will be reported to the Board in November.

The Board discussed the possible factors affecting August visitor numbers. Disappointing visitor attendance had been experienced by other London attractions. The greatest decline has been at the Tower, where the strength of the pound against the euro would have had the greatest impact due to the number of overseas visitors. The Chief Executive reminded the Board that we had set a challenging visitor target, were comparing against an exceptional prior year due to the Poppies installation, and yet at present we are still on track to achieve the third highest visitor number ever for the palaces.

Mike Stevens asked about the extent to which projects are covered by designated reserves. This was not reported on a monthly basis but explained at the start of the year in the Strategic Plan.

The Board also noted that although there was a dip in retail performance in August, it had held up well against other income areas.

The Board were pleased to note that Estee Lauder would be sponsoring the refresh of the *Fashion Rules* exhibition.



## 5.3 Key events for Trustees' diaries

5.3.1 The Board noted the dates of key events and undertook to attend if they were able.

## 6. Hillsborough Castle

6.1 The papers had been circulated in August to allow time to answer any further questions from the Board. The Board agreed that the papers clearly set out the financial case and in particular addressed the question of affordability. John Barnes outlined the future timetable for the Heritage Lottery Fund grant process.

The Board unanimously and enthusiastically supported the proposals to open up Hillsborough Castle and authorised the executive to submit a round one application for £4.95m to the HLF Heritage Grants Scheme by 8th October 2015.

Louise Wilson reported that she had made an excellent 3 day visit with Dan Wolfe, Marketing and Communications Director, to Northern Ireland to understand the visitor market.

## 7. Curators' Update

7.1 The Board noted the contents of the Curators' update. The Board thanked Lucy Worsley for an excellent paper. Although it contained a good summary of the Curators' work in the past year, the Board would welcome further information about plans for the year ahead. Lucy Worsley explained future plans in summary. As Curators were involved in virtually every strand of work, the programme for each curator would be different. In addition to research, leading projects or contributing to others, Curators also provide content for PR and Social media. A written overview of future activities will be appended to the next Chief Executive's report.

Achieving Independent Research Organisation Status (IRO) recently was the significant change during the year. The research strategy has created the research programme and it has given sharp focus to the complexity of managing our curatorial resources. The strategy makes the connections between the palaces, Historic Royal Palaces' ambitions and IRO status. The Board were pleased to hear that our first application for grant funding had been successful.

The Board asked Lucy whether the team had enough time for the research required for Hillsborough Castle. She explained that it was a challenge as there were four major projects, each requiring attention. John Barnes felt that there was a case for some further short-term support for Hillsborough. The Board praised the installation "Faces of Hillsborough", which had been developed using local curatorial support.

The Board asked about plans for the Tudors in 2018. John Barnes explained that the Tudor period was a core theme for Historic Royal Palaces and there would always be a strand of Tudor research.

Jonathan Marsden asked about further plans for art at the Palaces. The Cumberland Art Gallery at Hampton Court Palace was phase one of a renewed focus on art. The next phase is a trail of 16<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century art and a project for better access to the Mantenga Gallery. Michael Day reminded Trustees that the overall future resource planning and priorities were yet to be agreed. John Barnes nevertheless hoped that he had reassured Trustees that Art at the Palace is remaining in the programme, noting that the Cumberland Art Gallery had moved the bar up in terms of display and interpretation.



Bruce Carnegie-Brown asked about the rigour applied to marking interesting anniversaries. Lucy Worsley explained that detailed records are kept. It was interesting to see at the beginning of each year which dates emerged as the most engaging with audiences. Often it was not those dates one would expect that had the most impact. John Barnes noted that we use Twitter and Facebook to celebrate key dates.

## **8. Trustees Long-Term Succession Plan**

- 8.1 The Board noted the Long-Term Succession Plan for the Board which had been developed by the Nominations Committee. The Chairman was meeting the Secretary of State at the DCMS to brief him on the plan in October as context for the upcoming appointments.

## **9. Update on Buildings Insurance Cover**

- 9.1 Jane McKeown reported progress on identifying the options. The Audit and Risk Committee had endorsed her proposal to seek a more detailed quote. The Board agreed that she should continue to use the committee to check the approach with the aim to have the cover in place sooner rather than later.

## **10. Procedural Matters**

### **10.1 Register of Interests**

- 10.1.1 The Board noted the changes to the register of interests.

### **10.2 Board Meeting Dates**

- 10.2.1 The Board noted the contents of the report. Dates for 2016 were confirmed.

After discussion, it was agreed that the November 2015 location would be changed to Hampton Court Palace so that David Cannadine could join the meeting by video conference. In the light of this, the January 2016 meeting would now change to Kensington Palace.

The Board noted that following feedback of Trustees on their availability, further dates for 2017 and 2018 might need to be explored.

## **11. Next meeting:**

Trustees Meeting on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2015 – Please note that the location of this meeting has moved to HAMPTON COURT PALACE.

