



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: **Wednesday 15 November 2017**  
Location: **The Courtyard Room, Kensington Palace**

Attendees: Rupert Gavin (Chairman)  
Professor Sir David Cannadine (Deputy Chairman)  
Bruce Carnegie-Brown  
General Sir Nicholas Houghton  
Jane Kennedy  
Jonathan Marsden  
Carole Souter  
Sir Michael Stevens  
Sue Wilkinson

Apologies: Zeinab Badawi  
Ajay Chowdhury  
Louise Wilson

### 1. Opening business

- 1.1 The Chairman welcomed Trustees to the meeting.
- 1.2 Apologies were noted from Zeinab Badawi, Ajay Chowdhury and Louise Wilson.
- 1.3 Jane Kennedy reminded the Board that she is a Senior Partner of Purcell. Purcell has been selected as the architect for the build of the Orangery Wing at Kensington Palace.
- 1.4 The minutes of the last meeting were reviewed and agreed and progress on actions noted.

### 2. Monitoring Performance

- 2.1 *Chief Executive's monthly reports*  
John Barnes drew Trustees' attention to visit numbers. Although recent performance had been volatile, the overall position at year end is expected to be better than AOP.

John Barnes also explained that the tender returns for the works at Hillsborough Castle continue to be above prior estimates and the Executive Board has recognised that it will be necessary to top up the contingency. Taking Jane Kennedy's advice, in future tenders will also be sought from



companies based on the UK mainland. Despite the expected need to add to the contingency sum, the Executive Board had agreed to several items that it considered were necessary to enhance the visitor experience at Hillsborough.

Trustees raised the question of what is HRP's contingency plan if there is not an open border after EU exit and if Northern Ireland becomes less peaceful; acknowledging that these were complicated issues that required further thought.

Responding to an update on the Thames Ditton Collection Store, Trustees further questioned the need for it. Further information will be provided.

The post-project review of The Lost Palace will be made available to Trustees when complete.

## 2.2 *Financial reports*

Trustees noted the financial reports. Bruce Carnegie-Brown asked for further explanation of variances that are temporary, compared to those resulting from structural change. This will be considered and reported in the future. The Chairman asked for reassurance that the Tower entry work was still on track to be delivered ahead of the summer season 2018, and this will be reported to him.

## 3. **Strategic Planning**

### 3.1 Trustees noted the report, making suggestions for minor alterations, including clarification of the term 'surplus', which Sue Hall confirmed was surplus for projects.

Sue Wilkinson observed that HRP would need to explore further what is meant by being more inclusive within the idea to reach greater audiences.

Trustees were encouraged by the aim to evolve the cause, although agreed that this should not be rushed. They recommended that the Executive Board think about how HRP's impact could be reflected in the cause.

## 4. **Annual People Report**

### 4.1 Trustees noted the report. Bruce Carnegie-Brown queried the reduction in applicants since last year and Graham Josephs explained that the labour market was tighter and HRP was looking for staff in areas where skills shortages were greater. In his opinion, HRP is in a good place, but the employment environment is becoming more challenging. He also explained that at the moment the apprenticeship programme is largely focused on visitor services, gardeners and IS/ digital, and that



it is one of the mechanisms that HRP will use to grow its own talent.

In response to a query about absence levels at the Tower of London, Graham Josephs explained that this was combination of long and short term sickness; the former being unfortunate but unavoidable and the latter now being managed more effectively.

Trustees noted the figures on gender pay, which will be publicly reported as of April 2018. Consideration will be given as to the internal and external communication of these.

## **5. Domestic market update**

- 5.1 Trustees received an update on the domestic market strategy and were reminded that the reasons for making growth in our domestic audience a strategic priority in 2013 was to recognise that we are a British charity with, in part, a British public and to provide resilience against fluctuations in overseas visits.

Dan Wolfe explained that there was no hard evidence to quantify whether the reduction in visits experienced by some central London attractions was from domestic or overseas visitors, but anecdotally the initial impact appears to have been in a reduction in domestic visitors because overseas visitors could not cancel pre-planned trips.

Trustees discussed the degree to which new visitor experiences would bring about a permanent increase in domestic visits, and agreed that this cannot easily be determined.

## **6. Hampton Court Flower Show**

- 6.1 Trustees agreed the recommendation in the report.

## **7. Subcommittees**

- 7.1 Trustees fully endorsed the recommendation in the report from the Nominations Committee, to ask DCMS to re-appoint Sir David Cannadine and Jane Kennedy as Trustees for a further term of three years.

The Board received a verbal update from General Sir Nick Houghton on the last Remuneration Committee, noting and agreeing that Sue Wilkinson had been appointed to the Committee.



The Board received an update from the Chairman on the last Investment Committee.

**8. Re-authorisation of the contract with SoS**

- 8.1 Trustees noted the current status of the re-authorisation process and agreed both the new Matters Reserved for the Board and the HRP Code of Practice for Trustees.

**9. Procedural matters**

9.1 *Register of Interests*

Trustees noted the Register of Interests and changes since the last meeting.

9.2 *Memoranda of Understanding with Dumfries House Trust*

Trustees approved the Memoranda.

**Investment decisions and acquisitions**

9.3 *Barrack Block south façade, Hampton Court Palace*

Trustees approved the variation, recognising that budgets for any further work to the building may have to be increased, in light of the discoveries on the south façade. Full report on further works to be received.

9.4 *Acquisition of evening gown*

Trustees approved the acquisition. John Barnes gave Trustees details of some other items that are planned for acquisition. Due to the timing of the auction, Trustees would receive the appropriate requests outside of the meeting.

**10. Any other business**

The Chairman told Trustees that, in response to their request to reconsider the pattern of meetings, staff were analysing if this could be achieved.

Finally, as this was his last meeting, the Chairman thanked Jonathan Marsden for serving as a Trustee for the last seven years and for his great contribution to HRP over that time.

- 11. The next meeting will be on 24 January 2018 at Hampton Court Palace.**

