



**MINUTES OF THE (PROXY) ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
HELD AT EDINBURGH CENTRAL YOUTH HOSTEL ON  
SATURDAY 5<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2020**

**MINUTE NOS: 270 – 279**

**PRESENT:**

Sally Mayer, Chair

Margo Paterson, Chief Executive & Company Secretary

**270. CONFIRMATION OF PROXIES**

The Chair noted her thanks to all members who had sent their proxies, with a total of 229 having been received.

**271. BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND DIRECTORS**

The Chair noted the appointment of Jenn Ruddick as a new trustee, with the re-appointment of Duncan Craig and Claire McCorquodale following the board election earlier in the year.

She thanked the Governance Committee for its hard work and diligence in the recruitment campaign in October and November 2019 and to all nominees who had taken part in the selection process and members for casting their votes.

William Thomson had retired as a Trustee and the Chair noted the Board's thanks for his contribution during his term of office.

**272. M.686 MINUTES OF 2019 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The Minutes from the 2019 Annual General Meeting held in Glasgow Youth Hostel on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2019 were considered.

John Dickson proposed in writing the acceptance of the Minutes as a true recording of the meeting, with Michael Anderson as seconder.

**273. BUSINESS ARISING**

None.

**274. ANNUAL REPORT OVERVIEW**

The 2019-20 Annual Report was posted on our website for members to access as part of the AGM papers.

In the year we welcomed 346,989 overnights, with total income of £8,812,616 and a resulting surplus of £755,049. The Chair noted in particular donations and legacies of £375,658 which were gratefully received.

We continued to focus on the guest experience, raising standards and improving the hostelling product throughout the network, spending £2.1M in order to ensure that we remain competitive and the first choice for our guests. One of our objectives was to enhance the public spaces and this resulted in upgrades in Inverness, Glencoe and Oban Youth Hostels along with a £500,000 project to transform the ground floor of Edinburgh Central Youth Hostel.

2019-20 saw the return of the Hostel Handbook which highlighted travel inspiration whilst listing our hostels across the network.

Our youth engagement programmes continued with 610 young people and leaders from school and youth groups across Scotland benefitting from our Explorer and Mini Explorer funded trips.

We also continued to support the Scotspirit Programme in partnership with the Family Holiday Association which offers disadvantaged families across Scotland the opportunity to have a short holiday.

We provided 20 adult carers with a 2 night break and 14 young carers and leaders with a group break away in partnership with Respitality.

In total 906 young people, parents and leaders were supported through our charitable objectives in 2019-20.

We continued to run a range of volunteer programmes in 2019, welcoming 102 volunteers in the year.

Since 1931 it has been our mission to make more of Scotland more accessible to more people and this remains core to everything we do.

**275. OPERATIONAL UPDATE ON IMPACT OF COVID-19**

Before the impact of COVID-19, we were already operating in a time of economic uncertainty, with the potential impact of Brexit on the number of European guests, costs of supplies and retention of our European colleagues.

At the point of our hostels closing in March 2020, we were fortunate to be in a strong financial position, nevertheless the financial impact on the organisation has been devastating with the temporary closure of our network during what is traditionally our busiest months.

We reopened 7 hostels in August and they will be open to the end of October 2020. We have been delighted with the support from guests and members. The ongoing uncertainties surrounding social distancing and consumer confidence has provided us with new challenges.

We are committed to ensure the organisation remains viable in the long term and have taken advantage of the furlough scheme support to protect employees' livelihoods throughout this crisis to date.

**276. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS**

NONE

**277. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

In light of the ongoing pandemic, the date of the 2020 AGM is yet to be confirmed and will be intimated to members in due course.

**278. CLOSING REMARKS**

The Chair gave thanks to the Board members and individual members for their continued support and to Andy Waugh and Andrew Templeton for their work in the Governance Committee.

She gave special thanks to the CEO, Senior Management team and all employees for their hard work and diligence during an incredibly challenging year.

**279. VOTE OF THANKS**

David Calder submitted the following vote of thanks to the Chair:

This is the most unusual AGM in the history of our Association. Nobody could possibly have predicted, at the time of last year's AGM, the tumultuous events that have impacted us all in recent months. It's no exaggeration to say that the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on Hostelling Scotland has been, and will continue to be, profound.

It therefore gives me immense pleasure to congratulate the Chair, and the rest of the Board of Trustees, for their exemplary leadership over the last year. Following the rapid shutdown of all hostels in March, the Board has worked tirelessly, along with the senior management team, to ensure the survival and ongoing sustainability of the Association. Although it is early days, it is very pleasing to see that hostels are re-opening. It's also reassuring to note the capital commitment of 2019-20 and its pleasing to see these clear signs of ongoing commitment of the Board to our modernisation programme.

Of course, it is still early days, and the repercussions of the pandemic will inevitably continue with twists and turns over the coming year, our 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Hostelling Scotland is no different to other National Associations in the challenges that are being faced, however we have a professional and skilled Board that is as capable as any to seek a successful path through this crisis.

I should also note the fantastic work of the CEO and every member of her team in managing our ongoing operations safely, effectively and with resilience. I recognise that this has been an incredibly stressful time for all employees; despite that, I know everyone has stepped up to the mark. We have a great team in Head Office and every hostel across the network.

I believe now, more than ever, it's important that members show their support of Hostelling Scotland. Thank you to the Chair and her team for their stewardship over the past year.