

Minutes of the 48th Annual General Meeting of the Geological Curators Group

Held as a virtual meeting, 30th November 2021, 16:00 (GMT)

Started at 16:05 after a short break after the seminar

Sarah King welcomed everyone and explained how the meeting would work.

Emma Bernard (EB) wrote the minutes.

Committee present: Sarah King (SK), Emma Bernard (EB), Emma Nicholls (EN), Rachel Walcott (RW), Simon Harris (SH), Zoë Hughes (ZH), Lu Allington-Jones (LAJ), Cindy Howells (CH), Mike Howe (MH), Robert Lowther (RW), Nigel Larkin (NL) and Andrew Haycock (AH).

1. Apologies for absence

Sue Turner, Monica Price, Jackie Tweddle, Lil Stevens and Alex Peaker.

2. Acceptance of the minutes from the 47th AGM held virtually on 30th November 2020

Minutes have been previously circulated in electronic form and available on the GCG website.

Proposed: Robert Lowther

Seconded: Emma Nicholls

3. Acceptance of the minutes from EGM held virtually on 12th January 2021

Minutes have been previously circulated in electronic form and available on the GCG website.

Proposed: Zoe Hughes

Seconded: Alison Wright

4. GCG Annual Report for 2021

The Annual Report was circulated electronically to members (6 paper copies were sent out to those without internet access) and made available on the GCG website on 19/11/2021.

4.1 Chair – Sarah King (SK)

SK highlighted a few points from the annual report.

CIO has been with the Charity Commission for the last four months, but this has been delayed due to Covid. New posts will become part of the CIO. We will need to be flexible with this, until it is resolved.

Next year we will start looking at GCG finances as this is a good opportunity with the CIO coming in and we will need to get a new bank account. A variety of potential options are listed in the AGM report e.g., supporting members with grants (see report for further details). SK asked the members to let us know of any ideas they might have.

National Collections – UK Branch of DiSSCo (Distributed System of Scientific Collections) – see AGM report. Workshop was at the start of

October, further details sent out by SK via email and social media on 30/11/2021. It should have been sent out to institutions from DiSSCo. SK thanked the committee, in particularly Hilary Ketchum and her work on redrafting the “I am beginning my research. What do I do with my geological collection?”

(https://www.geocurator.org/images/resources/advice/GCG_research_booklet.pdf). Pip Brewer for all her work on revamping the journal. Andrew Haycock (AH) was welcomed as our new Society for the Preservation of Natural History Collections (SPNHC) rep. All the committee were thanked for their hard work during what has been another challenging year. (No questions from the membership).

4.2 Treasurer – Rachel Walcott (RW)

Accounts were displayed on the screen and are available in the circulated annual report.

RW reported that it has been a quiet year, probably due to Covid. RW will be stepping down this year from the Treasurer post and will be keeping the current accounts going until the new accounts are set up when the new CIO comes into place.

RW presented changes she has noticed over the last 5 years. The volume of traffic on PayPal has nearly doubled in 5 years. More people have been using PayPal, however there is a fee involved with this, which is something to consider. Subscriptions have dropped slightly. Expenditure has been very low this year. No committee expenses and no workshops this year. A big expense are the publications (see below). “Other” on the account is for the transcription of GeoCurator which is now a searchable resource online (<https://www.geocurator.org/journal>).

RW mentioned that when she joined the committee, the account balance was about £13,000 and now it is about £21,000, despite spending a couple of thousand pounds on transcriptions, which has been money well spent.

Only one auditor checked the accounts this year. However, as it has been quiet this year, the committee felt this was ok. The auditor found the accounts to be in order.

Accounts are presented at the end of this document.

(No questions from the membership).

4.3 Journal – Lu Allington-Jones (LAJ)

LAJ introduced herself as the interim Journal Editor and encouraged people to apply for the role. PB made a lot of good changes to the journal, and it is in a good place for someone else to take over.

We are looking at getting DOI’s next year and there is a team of people who can assist with the role.

Thanks to the Associate Editor Chris Dean, and the Production team Nicholas Baird and Emily Carlisle.

Apologies for the delay in sending out the physical copies of the journal via the post, this was unfortunately due to Covid. The UK issues have

recently been sent out and the overseas journals will be sent out soon. This covers the last three journal issues.

Currently have 5 or 6 articles for the next edition which will likely be published in February 2022, due to the change in editor. This is expected to be a thinner issue, possibly because people have not been able to get into work and subsequently there has been less to write about.

LAJ proposed that only one journal is published each year instead of two. Reasons to be explained under Point 5.

SK – a message in the chat from Sherri Donaldson (SD) “Is there still opportunities for people to contribute to the journal?” LAJ – yes if you are quick, due to turn around time for reviews. We welcome submissions for subsequent journals.

5. Discussion of membership rates

LAJ led the discussions and presented the information for GCG. This included an overview of our current payment structure; the actual costs; a list of what membership fees contribute to and the proposed new structure.

Current structure:

Personal £20; Concession £15; Institutional £25; Overseas personal £23; Overseas Institutional £27. This was last reviewed in 2015, the cost of things has changed due to inflation and postage has also increased over the years. The actual current costs (with 2 printed journals per year) are UK £29.85; Europe £44.45; Rest of the World £48.55. The people who receive the electronic journal are substantially subsidising those who receive the printed version. We would like to move towards a fairer system for all and if we continued as we are currently our healthy bank balance would disappear rapidly.

LAJ presented a list of where the money goes with the running of GCG.

Typical running costs are things like the website, but the biggest cost is the journal printing and postage.

The proposed new structure would be:

UK and overseas with electronic journal £20; UK with printed journal £25; Overseas with printed journal £35; Concession (default being electronic only) £15. The personal and institutional costs would be the same and there would only be one journal per year.

Advantages for having one journal per year were outlined. Such as higher quality articles which has proven to be difficult at times to receive enough submissions to warrant two journals per year.

Other platforms could be utilised more frequently to disseminate information more readily, like the blog or newsletter.

Roger Osborne (RO) – how many journals are still printed? Presumably the print numbers will reduce, and it is likely the cost for printing will increase per journal.

LAJ – we can still do a small print run. Most of the work goes into getting it into the right format. SK – it’s a print on demand model now. LAJ – a lot of the cost now is the postage, especially for places like Australia and Japan. SK

– these are costs that we do not have control over, and we try to do everything at cost. There is a potential to lose money.

RO – good to encourage people to switch to electronic only but give them an incentive. It is a good proposal. LAJ – we will keep some printed copies going e.g., for library repositories. SK – although LAJ is presenting this, it is something on committee that has been discussed and are in agreement. In the chat Roy Starkey (RS) was happy to support the proposal and Alison Wright (AW) said it was sensible.

SD in the chat – when do you propose to publish the one journal? LAJ - likely to be in June 2022. Will still publish the winter edition in February 2022. The June 2022 edition will be a special Ethics edition.

LAJ – we are not ditching the printed copies, only charging different fees to reflect the costs involved.

Two journals will be published next year.

SK – a lot of institutional memberships are mostly signed up for the journal for their library.

Anthony Morgan (AM) - The "membership fee" is a subscription to the journal, not the group. Being a specialist group of the Geological Society (Geol Soc), any member of the Geol Soc can come along to any GCG events and we can't charge them for this. SK – GCG is an affiliated group of the Geol Soc. Duncan Murdock is our rep. We discussed the CIO with them when we first proposed it and had several discussions about what our membership actually means. At the same time, they are also developing what Affiliated, Joint and Associated groups mean to them. There is a lot of work happening on the Geol Soc's Science Committee about this. We are an affiliated group, not a joint group. Therefore, we don't have any obligation to have members of the Geol Soc come to our events for free and they are happy for us to charge. We are an arm's length group. AM – does this mean we no longer have to send annual reports to the Geol Soc? SK – we never actually had to, but we do as a courtesy. Our dialogue with them is mainly via Duncan Murdock. The Geol Soc is also rethinking their relationships and obligations as well. We have a regular dialogue with them.

Mike Howe (MH) – an advantage of being an affiliated group is that we get free use of a Geol Soc room for committee meetings. The History of Geology Group (HOGG) are also in a similar situation, and they charge Fellows who want to attend their meetings.

SK – nothing was really written down previously and in the interests of getting things organised for the CIO, we want things to be clear and transparent and written down for the CIO. Therefore, we are within our rights to charge GSL members to attend our events.

EB - backed what SK had said.

SK – we are not going to take a vote on this at the moment as not everyone has seen this information presented today. Any feedback should be sent to us by end of February. The proposal will be sent to all shortly. Most people have been supportive of this proposal.

SK thanked LAJ for her work on this.

6. Election of Trustees for 2022

SK – listed the new roles on committee and shared the proposed new committee.

Unfortunately, as explained earlier the new CIO is not currently in place (see Point 4.1.).

SK – New posts are Vice-Chair, ideally will be someone internally to the committee already to keep continuity going. Equality Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator. The Collections Coordinator post has been tweaked slightly from the Collections Officer post at the moment and Communications Coordinator. New posts are set out in the agenda and the annual report and have an “*” next to the post.

Vice-Chair - as a committee we have put forward Emma Nicholls (EN) who is already on committee. EDI Coordinator is a new post which we advertised and received one applicant. Collections Coordinator received two applicants. Have unfortunately received no applicants for Communications Coordinator or the Journal Editor.

Concerned raised from AM – Are we voting on these posts for next year or now? As he does not think the new posts have been passed by the membership yet. SK – currently as the CIO has not passed these are indicative posts and can be seen as a “halfway house”, this situation is not ideal. AM – concerned that there is a big change from our current constitution and Officers posts, whereby we are increasing the number of Officer posts. Does not think this is constitutional unless it has already been passed by the membership. SK – in the Chair’s annual report it states that the CIO will be 12 Trustees and a series of Officers which aren’t Trustees specifically listed on the Charity Commission, but are volunteers which is similar to our current co-opted posts. These are new roles which don’t technically exist yet.

AM - Although worthy, AM called into question the need for an EDI Coordinator as anything on that topic will be covered by our own institutions and therefore, we can’t really influence diversity in our subject matter. SK – this post is looking inwards getting our own house in order initially and looking at the sector as a whole. It is a new role which can be developed. AM – can understand it being a co-opted role and temporary but not working as a full-time role. SK – something that we (committee) have been discussing for a while, especially in light of the Black Lives Matter movement and other things which have followed. We have issued statements and have committed to doing better. We currently have a low diversity on committee. AM – we can’t do much about that, we can only select from the pool of staff we have at institutions. SK – it is also about allowing people with protected characteristics or characteristics which are currently not represented on committee to come forward and removing any barriers to this and get a richer representation of people within the sector and drive the sector forward, ensuring everyone has a voice and can come forward, therefore making the subject much better for everyone. AM – being an affiliated group of the Geol Soc, they will have policies which will cover this already and if we don’t follow this already, they can pull us up on this. This is a useful post, but possibly not relevant to our everyday work. SK – we take on board what the

Geol Soc puts out, but this is a grass roots thing, and we need to put our own organisation into order. This is about creating a stronger voice for geosciences in general. By making it a full post we are embedding it into our structure.

In the chat - Sherene James-Williamson (SJW) - Diversity and inclusion is very important as it helps with how to support the membership.

Voting.

Simon Harris (SH) launched the polls online.

SK – applications were anonymised and sent around in advanced of the meeting. We welcome feedback on how this process went.

SH placed non-members and institutional members in the waiting room, until voting was concluded. Electronic voting options were shared, and SH explained the process. SK – all votes are anonymised Voting remained open for approximately 1 minute and a countdown was given leading up to the closure of the vote.

Summary of the votes are below.

1) Accept 2020 AGM minutes: Yes – 28, No – 0.

2) Accept 2021 EGM minutes: Yes – 29, No – 0.

SK shared the Collections Coordinator bio's. There were two applicants.

3) Vote for Collections Coordinator:

Candidate 1 - 9 Candidate 2 – 17 Abstain – 3.

4) Vote for EDI Coordinator: Yes - 25, No – 2. Abstain -1.

SH – it is worth pointing out at the first AGM of the new CIO all posts will be up for renewal, so this is only a set up for that.

5) Committee for 2022, as set out in the agenda and the annual report:

Yes – 26, No – 3, Abstain – 0.

SK thanked everyone for stepping forward.

Collections Coordinator – Mike Howe will remain in post.

EDI Coordinator – Meghan Jenkinson.

SK congratulated the successful candidates and welcomed them onto the committee. The next committee meeting will be in January 2022.

EB and SK will be in touch with all candidates.

Andrew Haycock (AH) introduced himself as the SPNHC rep and mentioned the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between GCG, SPNHC and NatSCA (Natural Sciences Collections Association) ([Memorandum of Understanding between SPNHC, GCG and NatSCA - The Geological Curators' Group \(geocurator.org\)](#) agreed in 2014. SPNHC has similar goals to GCG. AH mentioned what his role will involve, mostly reporting back and forth between the organisations. Reporting is usually done by writing up reports for each group. AH talked about the upcoming SPNHC meeting in Edinburgh, 4th – 10th June 2022. The theme is through the door and through the web,

releasing the power of natural history collections onsite and online. Abstracts submissions are open from 3rd Dec 2021 and close 28th Jan 2022. We hope to have a GCG representation at the conference.

SK thanks AH.

7. Any other business

Zoë Hughes (ZH) – appealed for any events that people might be interested in, help to run events or offer venues. Contact events@geocurator.org

EN – mentioned about the evening social following the AGM “The GCG Games” hosted by EN.

EB – thanked SK for all her hard work as Chair over the past year and the rest of the committee.

8. Date and venue for the next Annual General Meeting

SK - We will need to see how things progress over the next year and decide closer to the time if it will be an in person or virtual event.

SK – thanked everyone for attending.

Meeting closed at 17:15.

2021 Accounts presented to membership at AGM.

2021 Accounts
 28/10/2020 - 27/10/2021

Income	This year	2019-2020	Expenditure	This year	2019-2020
Workshops - AGM & GCG-run	£30.00	(£2,185.25)	Geol Curator 11	-£3,455.62	(-£1349.66)
Workshop - Co-sponsored	£0.00	£0.00	Workshops - AGM & GCG-run	-£30.00	(-£1021.74)
Subscriptions	£5,536.20	(£5,717.03)	Workshops - Co-sponsored	£0.00	£0.00
Donations	£15.88	(£90.58)	Committee expenses	£0.00	(-£682.9)
Publications	£0.00	(£43.00)	Website fees	-£256.79	(-£273.21)
Bank payments (for using debit card)	£0.00	(£9.61)	JISC GB/3D payments	£0.00	£0.00
			Brighton Medals [£1214.86 in fund]	£0.00	£0.00
			Sponsorship	£0.00	(-£125)
			Bank Fees	-£64.89	(-£93.74)
			Other	-£924.41	(-£1713.81)
	£5,582.08			-£4,731.71	
Balance as at 27/10/2020	£21,017.18		Balance as at 27/10/2021	£21,867.55	

Auditor:

Andrew Ross

Signed as a true record of events	Date
<i>Dr Sarah King Chair</i>	