

Porcupine Marine Natural History Society
45th Annual General Meeting
MINUTES

Saturday 2nd April 2022 – held online via Zoom
37 Members present on the Zoom call.

1. Apologies for absence – received from Iain Dixon, Matt Green, Roni Robbins
2. Matters arising from, and agreement of, the Minutes of the 44th Annual General Meeting held online, as published in the PMNHS Bulletin, Autumn 2021 Number 16. No matters arising and accepted by members present.
3. Officers' Reports:

The Hon. Treasurer's Report

Fiona Ware reported that the Society's financial situation is looking healthy, despite increased expenditure over the past two years as a result of externally facilitated virtual Conferences.

Two grants for the last year have not yet been claimed for owing to disruption to fieldwork as a result of Covid 19.

The finance report can be found at the end of this summary.

The Hon. Membership Secretary's Report

Presented by Natalie Hirst in Roni Robbins' absence. She reported that Membership numbers increased over the last year owing to several people joining in order to attend the conference. However, a number of these same individuals did not go on to submit a full membership form or renew their membership. Otherwise, membership remains fairly stable.

1. TOTAL NUMBER OF MEMBERS & BREAKDOWN

	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018
Overseas Members	1	1	1	1	1
Full Members (£25) ¹	1	1	1	1	1
Full Members (£20) ²	29	27	25	17	19
Full Members (£18)	152	143	133	135	132
Joint (Full) Members	6	7	7	9	9
Reduced Members	16	16	12	13	15
Student Members	31	24	16	15	12
Life Members (£18)	1	1	1	1	1
Life Members (£Free)	3	3	4	4	4

Total Members	240	223	200	196	194
National Museum Scotland	1	1	1	1	1
(EBSCO/Clarivate) - PDF only	2	2	2	2	2
Porcupine Archive	1	1	1	1	1
Libraries/Depositories	6	6	6	6	6

The Hon. Editor's Report

Vicki Howe reported that she was delighted to welcome Iain Dixon officially as the new Assistant Editor for the Bulletin.

Susie Arnott, who produced the original drawings of Scubahystrix in action, has kindly drawn a new selection for Porcupine and Members will see these appearing over the coming months.

The two editions of the Bulletin produced during the year once more had a good mix of articles. The Spring 2022 edition was rather more tricky as there had been limited activity during the year. Vicki explained that it is harder at the moment to get copy from the conference as a result of the shorter online format.

The winner of the Frank Evans Writing Award for the last year was “Fish have Friends” written by Martin and Sheilah Openshaw. Congratulations to them on an article containing a good mix of factual and academic information, along with a human touch!

The Panel felt that three other articles should be highly commended. These were “Observations of potting interaction with the chalk reef” by Rob Spray, “Observations from the Sea of Cortez” by Nigel Thomas and Matt Green’s article on snorkelling around the Gower coast.

The Hon. Editor wished to thank Teresa Darbyshire for her work in typesetting the Bulletin, and Roni Robbins for ensuring it gets distributed to all Members.

The Hon. Website Officer's Report – Tammy Horton

Hosting: The website is hosted by UK2, which provides a good service including the hosting of email addresses for all council members which can be managed, and access provided on the server.

General updates: Tammy requested that Members continue to send notices to be uploaded. These should be in text with appropriate pictures sent separately – not embedded in a word document.

Newsletter hosting & downloading: Issues of the Bulletin from the last two years are available to paid members of the Society. This is updated on the website prior to the March conference each year. Therefore, all back issues of the Newsletter/Bulletin are available on the website up to Bulletin number 11 (Spring 2020). Downloads of the Bulletin (password protected) for those choosing to receive the

Bulletin as PDF is via the website following some updates to fix the download size issue.

Council member details/positions & Constitution: Annual changes to council members' details are hosted on the website. This year we also added the duties of the Chair & Secretary and aim to produce similar documents for the other honorary roles. This is also where we host the AGM notices.

The current Constitution is here: <http://pmnhs.co.uk/contact-us>

The Privacy Policy is here: <http://pmnhs.co.uk/council-documents>.

Conference & Field trip information: The website hosts information and downloads about the annual conference and field trips, including linking to Eventbrite for tickets and posting information about the venues.

Social Media: The Facebook group remains very active with **1057** current members. Facebook is well-used for PMNHS interactions; for posting pictures, general discussions and enquiries. Our Twitter account is now steaming ahead with **1538** followers and **>3750** tweets posted. Both are useful platforms for disseminating information about PMNHS and require minimal effort. We remain grateful to @cardiffcurator (Kate Mortimer Jones) who sends many Porcupine posts.

The Hon Records Convenor's Report (Julia Nunn) March 2022

The recording scheme remains small, and is principally used for PMNHS field trip records. Records from the 2021 Porcupine BioBlitz in March prior to the conference, and 2021 Gower September, have been entered onto the Porcupine *Marine Recorder* database. Casual records were received from Jon Moore, Heather Buttivant & David Fenwick during the past year, and a number of older records were also added.

The database now holds 84 surveys with 41, 076 species records; an addition of 940 for the year. All records entered onto the Porcupine *Marine Recorder* database are made publicly available via DASSH, and thence to the NBN Atlas.

PMNHS has been represented by myself at a seven virtual meetings during the past year, chaired by JNCC, to discuss the redevelopment of *Marine Recorder*. The contract for development (funded by DEFRA) was awarded to Ocean Ecology in November 2021. *Marine Recorder* will be entirely online. The model is that participating agencies, record centres and groups such as Porcupine will have separate tenancies within the online structure. It is hoped that the new system will go live during the summer 2022.

As usual, a reminder to Members to submit records from any field work activities that have been held, in particular the Bioblitzes that took place during Covid.

A question was asked by one of the Members regarding where records go, mentioning one Bioblitz that had taken place recently. He was advised that Porcupine will accept any records that don't have a "home" elsewhere. It is advisable to negotiate this in advance for each individual event in order to ensure clarity and avoid duplication.

The Hon. Chair's Report

Natalie Hirst reported a very successful year, despite the ups and downs of Covid. It was pleasing to note that Porcupine activities hadn't been too curtailed during this period. The two copies of the Bulletin produced during the year were a particular highlight, landing on the doormat at times when 'normal' life seemed far off.

As she prepares to stand down, Natalie thanked Council members for the opportunity to be Chair of the Society and for the variety of activities she has been involved in.

She ended by requesting that Members present accept the Officer reports. This was done.

4. Announcement of winners of Porcupine grants:

This year, there were two successful applications for a Roger Bamber Research Grant. The first goes to Abbie Taylor for her project to produce a comprehensive guide to the terminology and identification of shovel head worms for all abilities. The sum of £532 was awarded.

The second award was made to Lara Baptista, for a project entitled 'Reconstructing the phylogeny and biogeographical history of phidolopodid bryozoans in the North Atlantic, conducted at the University of Porto, Portugal. This award was to the value of £995.

Congratulations to both and we look forward to hearing more about their projects in future issues of the Bulletin.

5. Election of Officers and Council.

Several Officer posts are available this year, and Porcupine is pleased to have received several expressions of interest for new Ordinary Members of Council.

PROPOSALS for election/re-election to Council and office bearers:

Natalie Hirst (Hon. Chair) is standing down and is NOT available for re-election.
Tammy Horton (Hon. Website Officer) is standing down and is NOT available for re-election to this post but wishes to stand as an Ordinary Member.
Roni Robbins (Hon. Membership Secretary) is standing down and is NOT available for re-election to this post but wishes to stand as an Ordinary Member.
Teresa Darbyshire and Matt Green are standing down by rotation and both are available for re-election.

New nominations:

Hon. Chair: Paul Brazier (nominated by Natalie Hirst, seconded by Winter Dotto)
Hon. Membership Secretary: Jon Moore (n. Vicki Howe, s. Kate Mortimer Jones)
Hon. Website Officer: Cat Joniver (n. Frances Dipper, s. Tammy Horton)

Ordinary Members:

Liz Morris-Webb, Laura Hanley, Becky McDonald Lofts, Tammy Horton, Roni Robbins

In the event there was one more nomination than spaces available on Council, so Roni Robbins agreed not to stand this time.

All voted en bloc. Nominated: Fiona Ware, Seconded; Sarah Bowen

Formal thanks were given to all Officers standing down by Vicki Howe. Firstly to Natalie Hirst for navigating Porcupine through the uncharted waters of the pandemic and our first digital conference.

Thanks were given to Roni Robbins in her absence. She joined Porcupine in 2002, and became Hon Records Convenor in 2005, then in 2016 moved on to become Hon Membership Secretary. Her task was to overhaul the system for Membership renewals and took on the distribution of the Bulletins. Unfortunately, Roni was not able to be present today as it was her daughter's 9th birthday party.

Tammy Horton also joined Porcupine in 2002, was elected to Council in 2005, began developing the website in 2006 before becoming Hon Website Officer in 2008. She was thanked for all her hard work in keeping the website updated with essential information for Members as well as managing conference bookings via Eventbrite. We are pleased that she has decided to stay as an Ordinary Member of Council.

6. AOB

There was no other business.

Sarah Bowen,
Hon. Secretary.