

Minutes of the AGM of the IfA Diggers' Forum

Society of Antiquaries 3rd October 2011 11am

Introductions and Apologies

Present: Chiz Harward (Chair) [CH], Sadie Watson (Secretary) [SW], Jez Taylor (JT), Mary Neale [MN], Geoff Morley (part) (GM), Alex Llewellyn (AL), Kathryn Whittington (KW).

Apologies: Andy Towle.

Chair's report

CH thanked Chris Clarke and Jez Taylor for all their work as Chair and Treasurer respectively, and all-round organisers of the DF since its inception.

Over the last year we have succeeded in our primary aim of revitalising the DF, and informing more people of what we do.

The relaunch of the newsletter was a major part of this. We could investigate using some other form of electronic publication, such as 'scribd', which makes it easier to read both online, on iphones and in printed versions. Members have started to send in articles and letters, which is very encouraging.

There are nearly 100 members on the Facebook page and we hope we can start to use it more as a forum rather than just to post info up onto it.

Two surveys have been done- the employees' away working survey and the employers' survey. 19 employers responded with only around 5 agreeing to have their names put to their pay grades etc. Over 200 people responded to the employees' survey- an amazing response. Next step is to work on the data and get the info to the Professional Development and Practice Committee.

The IfA published guidance on Self-Employment, which the DF welcomed and which should support self-employed archaeologists to charge a decent day rate.

Secretary's report

SW reported that we now have 10 members on the Committee, although not all of them can attend regular meetings due to work and geography.

We also have around 400 members, which makes us one of the largest SIGs.

There is also an email list of c 50 volunteers who entered their details onto the away survey questionnaire, offering to help with things. SW contacted them about pay minima and cost of living rises recently and had 20 replies- very encouraging.

This year SW has been working on the minima claim for November 2011's Council meeting. The DF and Gerry Wait (IfA Chair) have produced a report for Council regarding the claim for an increase in the minima for 2011-21. We have used Kate Geary's updated benchmarking report from 2010 to help with this. So far this is still confidential.

Treasurer's Statement

MN reported on the budget and the Committee voted to accept. Details are available on request. There is still potential for travel expenses for Committee visits to sites for recruiting events etc. The survey monkey account will be shutting within the next month. The event costs are also healthy- we should hold an event perhaps at Conference 2012?

Merchandising- we could use Tom's new DF logo to make badges, bags etc to sell and there are other possibilities for the logo being adapted to suit various seasonal events.

It would be good if the DF could provide bursaries for members to attend the Conference in 2012, especially as we are hopefully doing a session with the Finds Group, which would be excellent CPD.

Election of Committee

The Committee will continue as before, due to a lack of other volunteers...

Email members asking for more Committee members.

MN was nominated by CH to stand as Chair, and seconded by JT.

DF objectives for the year ahead

Recruit more members- we set a provisional total of 500, of which 50 should be non-IfA members. We are in the best place to recruit non-IfA members, as our potential membership is within the field teams.

Recruit more people onto the Committee and official positions.

Work on the survey data and get the info to the Professional Development and Practice Committee.

Commit Council to maintain the pay minima increases in the future to try and claw back some of the losses since it was stalled. CPI seen as a good objective to aim for (currently 4.4%), although with inflation added on top preferably. Ultimately we want to be heading towards the recommended starting salaries.

Conference 2012 (Oxford) session and possibly a social event.

Bursaries for DF members to attend Conference.

Outreach- possible links with universities. We can produce seminars that DF reps could take around Unis and present to undergrads.

CPD- the conference sessions could be made into smaller CPD sessions for DF reps to run on sites.

AOB

Linked-In. MN reported that it seems helpful, and discussion groups are possible on it.

Members can also send messages if they are looking for work.

Date and location of next AGM. To be confirmed, but should be in October 2012.