SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES OF LONDON

COUNCIL

Thursday, 10 July 2025
At Kelmscott Manor and Online, 1.30 pm

Prof. Martin Millett, President, in the chair

Present:
Prof Martin Millett, President (MM)
Ms Shahina Farid, Hon. Secretary (SF)
Prof Anthony Musson, Vice President (AM)
Dr Stewart Bryant (SB)
Dr Dustin Frazier Wood (DFW)
Dr Elizabeth Hallam Smith (EHM)
Mr Timothy Loughton (TL)
Dr Andy Seaman (AS)
Dr Tom Williams (TW)

In attendance:
Ms Natasha, McEnroe, General Secretary (NM)
Ms Chiara Betti, Curatorial Research Assistant (CB)
Dr Sophia Collingwood, Finance Director (SC)
Marta Naumova, Governance and Grants Officer (MN)

Apologies: Dr Carol Bell, Dr Sam Lucy, Prof. Jenny Alexander, Dr Kenneth Brophy, Mr Dominic Wallis

27/25 Welcome and apologies

i. The President introduced Sophia Collingwood, Timothy Loughton, Dustin Frazier Wood, Stewart Bryant, and also introduced in absentia Sam Lucy and Kenneth Brophy.

ii. The President announced the appointment of Anthony Musson as Vice President.

28/25 Prints and Drawings presentation

i. CB presented the updates on her Prints and Drawings Collection review, and reported:

   a. Current estimate of the collection size is over 60,000 individual items.

   b. Objectives of the project are to develop cataloguing, create guidelines, and establish cataloguing priorities.

   c. Next steps for the project: completing the survey, getting grant for the project study, curating and preparing for a display (first week of October 2025).

ii. The 6th of November fundraising event Past Matters: Drawn to Discovery at the Antiquaries event was discussed. **ACTION: NM to circulate to the Council the information about the event.**

[CB left the meeting at 1:42 pm]

29/25 Minutes of the Meeting of Council on 1 May 2025

Papers having previously been circulated:

i. The minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of Council on 1st of May 2025 and from the Meeting of Council on 13th of March, were approved and signed, with the provision of adding SB's name on the 13th of March set of minutes.

30/25 Matters arising

11/25ix – MM reported a successful completion of online meeting with about 20 American Fellows in the spring, which resulted in good feedback.

13/25 – It was reported that a temporary benefactors' board has been installed.

14/ 25 – It was reported that a managing agent is now in place with improved communication.

15/25 – It was reported that the 2022/2023 audit has been submitted.

31/25 General Secretary's Report

A paper having previously been circulated:

i. The General Secretary presented the report, drawing particular attention to the following points:

    a. Dr Alexandra Ault FSA was appointed as the new Head of Collections, starting in mid-September.
    b. Magna Carta exhibition is in preparation and will be opening soon.
    c. Report from Dominic Wallis was passed on: the fundraising towards the lease received £440,000 in donations and £880 752 in legacy.
    d. Past Matters development project is supported by a fundraising campaign.
    e. Updates on the Threads of the Past project were provided.

32/25 Finance Report and Budget Paper

A paper having previously been circulated:

i. The President noted that as the Treasurer was not present, the Finance Director would report on her behalf.

ii. The President thanked the Finance Team for their work in preparing the Report and Budget Paper.

iii. [Redacted]

iv. A discussion followed, highlighting:
    a. The number one strategic priority is paying of the Burlington House lease.
    b. The need for further interim support for the Finance function for at least 2 months.

v. Council approved the budget.

vi. [Redacted].

vii. It was also reported that the Burlington House lease needs to be paid off by October 2034. Annual instalments of £454,000 would be required to do this.

viii. A summary of the Finance Risk Register was presented, with the following two points highlighted:
    a. Getting the 2024-2025 accounts ready for audit is proving to be challenging given the previous problems in the Finance department.
    b. Correspondence with HMRC has been time consuming as VAT and Corporation Tax compliance has been poor over the previous 15 months.

ix. The need for additional finance staffing was discussed, with the proposition of hiring additional finance support for Kelmscott Manor.

33/25 Risk

A paper having previously been circulated:

i. Lessons Learned: Failures of Finance Department document was presented, highlighting the following key issues:
    a. Temporary leadership
    b. Capability and recruitment
    c. Lack of implemented controls

ii. 'Traffic-light' code system for tracking challenges was proposed. **ACTION: TL and NM to discuss this system and come up with implementation plan.**

iii. Risk documents were presented, highlighting the following areas:
    a. Finance
    b. Building and facilities
    c. Systems and processes
    d. Staffing

iv. It was discussed whether risk documents should be shared with the staff. The Committee was in favour of this idea. **ACTION: NM circulate the risk documents to the team.**

34/25 Committee Minutes

Papers having previously been circulated:

i. The loans from the 5th of June Library and Collections meeting were approved by the Council.

35/25 Honorary Fellowship nominations update and Royal Fellows update (verbal).

i. It was reported that ballots for Honorary Fellowship elections are being prepared for implementation. The process takes launching a new server. **ACTION: MN and Annabel Harrison to launch this. Update on the progress at the next Council meeting.**

ii. The need to think about nominations for 2026 was highlighted. **ACTION: ALL to think of good candidates.**

iii. The need to make clear what does the role of Honorary Fellow should include was highlighted. Potential risk of lack of clarity was discussed. **ACTION: NM and MM to produce a 'job description' for Honorary Fellowship. NM to flag this risk on the Rick Register.**

iv. The recommendation of the Fellowship Committee was not to currently pursue Royal Fellowships. It was agreed that if a member of any country's royal family would like to become a Fellow, Honorary Fellow route should be suggested.

v. Council approved the recommendation of the Fellowship Committee.

36/25 Terms of Reference (Fellowship committee & Past Matters Working Group)
A paper having previously been circulated:

i. Council approved Fellowship committee ToR.
ii. Council approved Past Matters Working Group ToR.

37/25 Dates of the upcoming Committees and Council Meetings until Jun 2026
A paper having previously been circulated:

i. Council approved the Dates of the upcoming Committees and Council Meetings until Jun 2026 with the provision that the 30th of October meeting of the Finance Committee may change to an alternative date on the same week.

38/25 Museum
Papers having previously been circulated:

i. The Council approved the alterations to the Research request which has been previously approved for LDSAL 330 Portrait of Henry VI from Nevill Keating Pictures

ii. The Council approved deaccessioning for the following items:
    a. Plaster cast of the Rosetta stone LDSAL4.
    b. Cast of a Greek dedicatory inscription LDSAL5.
    c. Inscribed pillar of granite LDSAL6.
    d. Plaster cast of Paris LDSAL14.
    e. Sculptured Stone capitals LDSAL146.

39/25 Safeguarding Policy update

A paper having previously been circulated:

i. It was reported that there has been modifications done to the Safeguarding Policy, specifically to do with personal details and young volunteers.

ii. Council approved the Safeguarding Policy Update.

40/25 Standing items

i. The General Secretary reported no updates on the Health and Safety report.

ii. The General Secretary reported no updates on the Ethical Conduct Body.

iii. The Governance and Grants Officer reported Fellowship numbers:
   a. Fellows: 3210
   b. Affiliates: 671

41/25 Confidential item [Redacted]

42/25 AOB

i. Trustees were asked to fill in the Council Skills Audit Form. **ACTION: ALL to fill in the form and send to MN.**

ii. Update on the Royal Society of Chemistry basement flooding was given:
   a. SAL's storage room at the Chemistry Society basement experienced major flooding in December 2024 and several minor leaks since.
   b. It was agreed that if the basement storage room at the Chemistry Society to be used by SAL, the faulty pipes and asbestos need to be safely removed and replaced with better quality and safer products. **ACTION: NM and MM to have a discussion on this.**

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 3.20 pm.

Prof Martin Millett, President

Ms Natasha McEnroe, General Secretary,

Ms Marta Naumova, Governance and Grants Officer

July 2025