



Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland

Minute of the Plenary Meeting held at John Sinclair House at 10am on Friday 19 March 2010.

Present:

Professor J Hume (Chairman), Dr K Byrne, Mr M Hopton, Professor J Hunter, Dr G Masterton, Dr S Nenadic, Mrs D Murray (Secretary), Ms R Bailey, Mrs L Ferguson, Mr D Mackie, Mr J Stevenson, Dr A Jackson (minutes).

Apologies:

Ms J McCoy, Ms E Reid

1. Reserved Business

None

2. Minutes and matters arising from the Plenary meeting of 4 December 2009

Action Point 4

Ms Bailey reported that RCAHMS are eligible to apply to the Paul Hamlyn Trust.

The minutes were approved with no further matters arising.

3. Secretary's Report

Mrs Murray highlighted developments relating to Scotland's Rural Past (SRP), Marine Scotland, the Rothesay Urban survey, the purchase of new 3D scanner, the Specialist User Recording Environment project (SURE) and the review of public services.

Mrs Murray reported that members of the SRP Advisory Group had expressed considerable enthusiasm for pursuing funds to extend the life of the project beyond 2011.

Mrs Murray reported that RCAHMS has prepared a paper for government relating to Marine Scotland that sets out the requirement for funds and are waiting for Historic Scotland to produce their paper before making a joint formal approach to government.

Mr Stevenson reported a productive meeting with Historic Scotland to take forward in partnership the urban survey of Rothesay, Bute.

Mrs Murray reported that RCAHMS now have a 3D scanner and are in the process of working up a *modus operandi* on how RCAHMS will use it. Professor Hunter asked whether this would affect our relationship with Historic Scotland. Mr Stevenson responded that we were no longer reliant on using Historic Scotland's scanners but RCAHMS is still to resolve issues relating to the storage and preservation of Historic Scotland and RCAHMS scan data. The Chairman congratulated Survey and Recording on this new development.

Mrs Ferguson reported that a bid had been submitted to the Art Fund to assist with the purchase of two drawings by David Bryce. The purchase will only go ahead once the

provenance of the drawings has been properly established.

Ms Bailey summarised changes to the Public Search Room staffing and opening times. The changes will reduce the impact on staff time in Survey & Recording and will be reviewed after 3 months. The review will include the gathering of user feedback.

Mrs Ferguson reported on the Aerofilms project, which is a joint submission to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) with English Heritage and RCAHMS. The bid is reliant on RCAHMS securing £100,000 from other sources. RCAHMS put in a bid to the Scottish Government for £25,000 per year for over 4 years, however the Scottish Government has indicated that no future funding of this kind can be committed at this time. Alternative funding is being sought. Mrs Ferguson also reported that the Scottish Parliament have declined to support the Islands Project. Ms Bailey is currently reprofiling the project.

Mrs Murray reported that at the SWISH Steering Group in December it was agreed that there should be a strategy in place for the future of the partnership project. Jonathan Hudson (RCAHMS Commissioner) has produced an outline strategy for discussion by a new SWISH strategy group.

The Chairman reported that he attended the opening of the Beveridge exhibition at the Carnegie Birthplace Museum, which he co-chaired with the Chairman of the Museum Trust, David Smith. David Smith was very positive about working with RCAHMS and wished to see more RCAHMS exhibitions at the Museum. Mr Hopton added that he had visited the exhibition and felt that the exhibition space and layout had not done proper justice to the exhibition. Ms Bailey proposed that RCAHMS gift a framed print from the exhibition to the Scottish Parliament Collection so that it might be on view.

Mrs Ferguson

Mrs Murray reported that the strategic realignment of the Education & Outreach, Collections and Information Systems groups was in the process of being implemented. Corporate Affairs and Survey and Recording will follow but have been put on hold to allow for new heads of these groups to take them forward. The Chairman welcomed the reappraisal and the positive moves to align staffing to facilitate the achievement of RCAHMS strategic priorities.

4. Staffing and training opportunities

Ms Bailey reported on the Future Jobs and Skills for the Future initiatives. Future Jobs is a UK government funded programme designed to create employment opportunities for 6 months for the unemployed. It is fully funded to cover the salary costs of the staff. RCAHMS has bid for 6 posts from April to October and then 8 posts from October to March 2011. The recruitment is through the Jobcentre in Leith and the interviews took place at a Job Fair on Wednesday 17 March. The appointments will be providing assistance with collections management and with the digitisation and cataloguing of aerial collections.

Skills for the Future is lottery funded with the aim of training young people during the recession to provide them with the skills to enter employment once the job market improves. RCAHMS will be providing training opportunities in two areas: documentation and dissemination. Documentation covers the lifecycle of collections material and dissemination the promotion of collections material and RCAHMS work. The training will be work based, which requires assessment and accreditation. Partnerships have been agreed with Perth College Centre and the University of Dundee to put together 10 accredited undergraduate level distance-learning modules. The training programmes will include placements in local authority archives or at Historic Scotland or the National Trust for Scotland heritage sites. RCAHMS has also negotiated a partnership with The National Archives in London to exchange trainees. The funding

programme is very competitive and only 10 projects across the UK will be successful. RCAHMS intends to work with the Civvy Street and Capability Scotland charities to provide opportunities to injured ex-servicemen and the educationally disadvantaged. Dr Nenadic observed that the management of the Skills for the Future programme could prove very challenging for RCAHMS.

Mr Stevenson reported that the Council for British Archaeology (CBA) have approached RCAHMS. The CBA have submitted a bid for 9 trainees on the Skills for the Future programme, and have asked that 1 of these posts work with RCAHMS. They are targeting archaeologists who have been made redundant. RCAHMS has also bid for 2 one year IFA bursaried posts.

Mrs Ferguson reported that RCAHMS is one of 34 partners in a major EU funded European wide project, Archaeolandscapes, which aims to improve the understanding of aerial photography and GIS in heritage bodies. RCAHMS will offer short placements for staff from other organisations to come and work on our international aerial collections. RCAHMS expects 2 placements per year for the next 5 years. These are entirely funded by the European Union and partner organisations.

5. Financial report

Mr Mackie gave a brief presentation on RCAHMS finances for 2009/10 and 2010/11 highlighting the reduction in Scottish Government funding, the increase in the paybill from 1 August 2010 and rising fixed costs. Discussion focused on the forecast deficit for 2010/11. Commissioners agreed that the Chairman should write to the Minister highlighting the projected shortfall in 2010/11. Mr Hopton requested that at the next meeting Commissioners should be presented with the probable outcome on the year.

Mr Mackie

Mr Turnbull reported on RCAHMS Enterprises healthy sales performance for the first 11 months of the year. Scran and RCAHMS sales have performed strongly and the National Collection of Aerial Photography (NCAP) sales are on course to exceed the 2009/10 sales targets. The ScotlandsPlaces portal has contributed to RCAHMS image sales. Discussion focused on the need to ensure RCAHMS provides sufficient pricing and copyright information on its website to counter any negative perception that RCAHMS is becoming more commercial.

The Chairman thanked Mr Mackie and Mr Turnbull and their staff.

6. Building and Estates Committee Report

Mr Hopton reported on progress. RCAHMS has taken the decision to move out of the temporary store at Baileyfield by March 2011, possibly to Edinburgh City Council's refurbished archive stores at Murrayburn. This would be a short-term solution while longer-term solution is being resolved. Other options are also being explored.

Professor Hunter asked whether the costs of running new establishments would be greater than for John Sinclair House. Commissioners agreed that reference to the impact of additional running costs should be included in the Chairman's letter to Government. Mrs Murray added that the Scottish Government are fully aware that moves may require an increase in funding.

The Chairman thanked staff.

7. Publications

Ms Bailey reported that *Above Scotland* has been reprinted. To date 5200 copies have been sold; 1200 off the back of the special offer in The Scotsman supplement. *Wanderings with a Camera* has sold 2638 copies. Total publication sales income to date stands at £129,326, with 10292 units sold. The two forthcoming mass-market titles are *Victorian Scotland* and *Above Scotland - Cities*. Both new titles will be advertised in The Scotsman. The next two mass-market titles scheduled for 2011 will be series *Above Scotland - Islands* and *Edwardian Scotland*. The Chairman and Dr Nenadic offered to read the texts prior to printing.

The next research title will be the *Great Crowns of Stone – The Recumbent Stone Circles of Scotland* to be published in November 2010. The three research titles for 2011/12 will be *Scottish Historic Schools pre-1880*, *Dumfries House: the architectural development of a Scottish country house from the 18th century*, and *Lost Gardens pre 1750*.

Ms Bailey reported on the Literature Working Group Policy Report, which makes reference to RCAHMS in its recommendations and includes a recommendation to set up a government body to examine possible reform of state procurement for public organisations. The Chairman responded that RCAHMS has a duty to publish and that - with the mass-marketing publications - RCAHMS both needs the income and, by producing them in-house, can ensure that the publications are of the quality expected of any RCAHMS publication. Mrs Murray proposed that this be raised during the Minister's visit to RCAHMS.

Mrs Murray

8. Future RCAHMS

Mrs Murray gave a presentation on Future RCAHMS. Mrs Murray set out the RCAHMS business planning framework explain, focussing on the linkages between the business strategy (Future RCAHMS), outcomes, the business plan (costed plans for work), the underpinning strategies that support business strategy and achievement of objectives, the policies that guide RCAHMS strategies, operational plans that detail programmes and projects of work and individual forward job descriptions.

Dr Masterton highlighted importance of Safety and Risk Management. Mrs Murray proposed that a comprehensive list of underpinning policies should be provided to Commissioners. The Commissioners proposed that they should be involved in a workshop on Future RCAHMS. It was agreed that the June 26 Plenary meeting should be used as workshop to focus discussion.

Mrs Murray

Mrs Murray

9. Programme Committees – April 2010

Mrs Murray proposed that the programme committees be restructured for the April 2010 meeting to provide Commissioners an opportunity to focus on Future RCAHMS. The format of the meeting is still to be decided. The 6-month report from the groups will still be provided. The new arrangements will be reviewed to see whether the new format will be adopted for future meetings.

10. Field Meeting – September 2010

Mr Stevenson reported that work had commenced on preparing this year's trip scheduled from 31st August to 2nd September. Commissioners will stay at Ferniehall Castle in Fife; visits will be arranged to sites in the region. Commissioners to reconfirm that they can attend the field meeting

Commissioners

11. AOCB

Professor Hume reported that the 4 new Commissioners had not yet received their Royal Warrants. They will be inducted into the Commission in April.

The Chairman welcomed the appointment of Donald Mackie (Head of Corporate Affairs) and Graham Turnbull (Head of Enterprises) to RCAHMS Senior Management Team.

The Chairman thanked Dr Jackson for acting as Head of Corporate Affairs. Dr Jackson will continue as secretary to Commissioners.

Professor Hunter highlighted the 2nd edition of his and Professor Ralston's publication of *The Archaeology of Britain* and donated copies to RCAHMS.

ACTION POINTS Plenary Meeting of Friday 19 March 2010.

	ACTION POINTS	Action By	Action Status
1.	Item 3: RCAHMS to gift a framed print from the Erskine Beveridge exhibition to the Scottish Parliament Collection.	Mrs Ferguson	Pending
2.	Item 5: Commissioners should be presented at future plenary meetings with a financial report showing the probable outcome on the 2010/11 year.	Mr Mackie	Pending
3.	Item 7: Mrs Murray to highlight RCAHMS publications during the Minister's visit to RCAHMS.	Mrs Murray	Pending
4.	Item 8: A comprehensive list of underpinning policies should be provided to Commissioners.	Mrs Murray	Pending
5.	Item 8: It was agreed that the June 26 Plenary meeting should be used as workshop to focus discussion on Future RCAHMS.	Mrs Murray	Pending
6.	Item 10: Commissioners to reconfirm that they can attend the field meeting	Commissioners	Pending