

**National Museums Scotland
Board Of Trustees**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 4 JUNE 2025
AT THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF SCOTLAND, EDINBURGH**

Present:

Mr Ian Russell	Chair
Ms Mimi Brophy	Trustee
Dr Hermione Cockburn	Trustee
Ms Judith Cruickshank	Trustee
Mr Stephen Dando	Trustee
Prof Manuel Fernández-Götz (in part)	Trustee
Mr Graeme Gibson	Trustee
Prof Alistair Hetherington	Trustee
Dr Bridget McConnell	Trustee
Ms Niki McKenzie	Trustee
Ms Sally Mackay	Trustee
Ms Jandy Stevenson	Trustee
Prof Ian Wall	Trustee
Dr Laura Young	Trustee

In Attendance:

Ms Hannah Barton (HB) (in part)	Head of Digital Media
Dr Chris Breward (CB)	NMS Director
Dr Sam Alberti (SA)	Director of Collections
Mr Stuart Douglas (SD) (in part)	Director of NMS Enterprises Ltd
Ms Michelle Eaves (ME)	Corporate Support Manager
Ms Ruth Gill (RG)	Director of Public Programmes
Ms Helen Ireland (HI)	Director of External Relations
Mr Keith Pentland (KP)	Director of Finance & Resources
Dr Lorraine Russell (in part)	Health and Safety Manager

Apologies:

Ms Beth McKillop	Trustee
Prof Richard Oram	Trustee

PRELIMINARIES

The Chair welcomed everyone to the Board meeting, and in doing so, welcomed new Trustees Prof Alistair Hetherington and Ms Niki McKenzie to their first meeting.

PRE-MEETING SESSION

Trustees received a tour of the National Museums Collection Centre by Sam Alberti, Director of Collections and Yvonne Brownlee, Acting Head of Collections Services.

Trustees extended their thanks for the tour.

ITEM 1 – APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Richard Oram and Beth McKillop. *The meeting was quorate.*

**ITEM 2 – MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON
26 MARCH 2025****NMS (2025) 2nd Mtg**

2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 26 March 2025 were **approved**.

ITEM 3 – MATTERS ARISING

3.1 Matters arising from the last meeting had been completed.

ITEM 4 – DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

4.1 It was noted that there were no declarations of interests from Board members in relation to the substantive items on the agenda.

ITEM 5 – DIRECTOR’S REPORT TO TRUSTEES**NMS (2025) 18**

5.1 The Director presented his report which had been circulated. Highlights included:

Impact

- Across our four museums, we welcomed 3.2m visits in 2024/25. The National Museum of Scotland attracted 2.28m visits in 2024-25, 5% up against 2023-24 and 12% up against forecast. The National Museum of Rural Life had its busiest year ever with 117k visits
- Tickets are now on sale for the summer exhibition, *Monkeys: Our Primate Family* and for the first time, we are offering discounted tickets for those receiving Universal Credit or other benefits. We are trialling the approach and, if successful, intend to roll this offer out to future paid exhibitions and site admissions.

Digital Media

- Our social media channels achieved 17,349,630 impressions throughout 2024/25. Within this volume, we achieved 4,758,886 video views cross-channel, which is a 250% increase year on year.

Development

- 2024/25 was a strong year for unrestricted support: Membership subscription income exceeded target by nearly 30%, thanks in part to the popularity of the *Game On* exhibition Contactless and SMS site donations also exceeded target by 9%, an increase of 20% (£14.9k) on 2023/24. Patrons' income also exceeded the 2023/24 total and Corporate Membership income matched the 2023/24 total.

People

- All EDI Mainstreaming publishing requirements were completed in April 2025

- Development of the new action plan to support our new 2025-2029 mainstreaming outcome is progressing
- The first meeting has taken place with the Trade Unions with respect to Pay increases for 2025/26. Further meetings are planned for the end of June/beginning of July.

Public Programmes

- Scottish Government confirmed Maths Week Scotland funding for 2025-2026
- Edinburgh Science Festival ran from 5-20 April with the theme of *Spaceship Earth*, using the concept of space travel to learn how to live with finite resources. Total participation was 58,663.

5.2 The Director outlined his findings of the new V&A Storehouse from his recent visit and the Chair invited questions on this, together with questions on the Director's Report.

ITEM 6 – FINANCIAL REPORT

NMS (2025) 19

6.1 Keith Pentland, (Director of Finance and Resources), presented the report that had been circulated which the Board noted.

ITEM 7 – COLLECTIONS AND RESEARCH REPORT

NMS (2025) 20

7.1 Trustees noted the Collections & Research Report and congratulated Sam Alberti, (Director of Collections), and the Collections team, on the quality and diversity of the publications.

Trustees requested a future presentation about DiSSCo.

SA advised that he would be happy to oblige and prepare something for Trustees.

SA

ITEM 08 – DIGITAL STRATEGY

NMS (2025) 21

8.1 Trustees welcomed Hannah Barton, (Head of Digital Media), to the meeting, who presented the Digital Strategy which had been circulated.

8.2 The Board asked questions on the paper and following discussion and review, Trustees **approved** the Digital Strategy.

ITEM 09 – NMS ENTERPRISES LTD STRATEGY

NMS (2025) 22

9.1 Trustees welcomed Stuart Douglas, (Director of NMS Enterprises Ltd), to the meeting, who presented the NMS Enterprises Ltd Strategy which had been approved by the NMSE Board before circulating.

9.2 Following discussion and review, Trustees noted the NMS Enterprises Ltd Strategy, wishing them a successful year, about which they looked forward to receiving updates throughout the year.

ITEM 10 – HEALTH & SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT

NMS (2025) 23

10.1 Trustees welcomed Lorraine Russell, (Health and Safety Manager), to the meeting, who presented the Health & Safety Annual Report which had been circulated.

10.2 Following discussion and review Trustees **approved** the Health & Safety Report and its publication.

ITEM 11 HEALTH & SAFETY MANAGEMENT POLICY

NMS (2025) 24

11.1 Lorraine Russell, (Health and Safety Manager), presented the Health & Safety Management Policy which had been circulated.

11.2 Following discussion and review, Trustees **approved** the Health and Safety Management Policy and its publication.

ITEM 12 – BOARD COMMITTEES

Nominations & Governance Committee

12.1 The Chair noted that the draft minutes of the Nominations & Governance Committee meeting held on 23 April 2025 had been circulated.

People & Remuneration Committee

12.2 The Chair noted that the draft minutes of the People & Remuneration Committee meeting held on 12 May 2025 had been circulated.

Audit and Risk Committee

12.3 The Chair noted that the draft minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held on 10 March 2025 had been circulated.

Finance Committee

12.4 The Chair noted that the draft minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 27 May 2025 had not been circulated.

The committee had mainly looked at the management accounts and the good work undertaken on the Finance Strategy.

NMS Enterprises Ltd Board

12.5 The Chair noted that the next meeting of the NMS Enterprises Ltd Board would be held on 6 June 2025.

Estates Committee

12.6 The Chair noted that the next meeting of the Estates Committee would be held on 11 June 2025.

Collections Development Committee

12.7 The Chair noted that the next meeting of the Collections Development Committee would be held on 17 June 2025.

ITEM 13 – FORWARD PROGRAMME OF BUSINESS

NMS (2025) 25

13.1 The Board noted the forward programme of business.

ITEM 14 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS

14.1 There was no other business raised at this meeting.

ITEM 15 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING

15.1 The next meeting would be held on Wednesday 24 September 2025 at the National Museum of Scotland.