

**National Museums Scotland
Board Of Trustees**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 24 SEPTEMBER 2025
HELD 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	Trustee
Mr Graeme Gibson	Trustee
Prof Alistair Hetherington	Trustee
Dr Bridget McConnell	Trustee
Ms Niki McKenzie	Trustee
Ms Beth McKillop	Trustee
Ms Sally Mackay	Trustee
Prof Richard Oram	Trustee
Prof Ian Wall	Trustee
Dr Laura Young	Trustee

In Attendance:

Dr Chris Breward	NMS Director
Dr Sam Alberti	Director of Collections
Ms Michelle Eaves	Corporate Support Manager
Ms Ruth Gill	Director of Public Programmes
Ms Jess Hogg (in part)	Head of Development
Mr Keith Pentland	Director of Finance & Resources

PRELIMINARIES

The Chair welcomed everyone to the Board.

PRE-MEETING SESSION

Trustees received a Natural Sciences presentation including invertebrates, biodiversity, and DiSSCo from Nick Fraser, Keeper, and Ashleigh Whiffin, Entomology Curator.

Trustees extended their thanks for the outstanding presentation.

ITEM 1 – APOLOGIES

No apologies were received; all Trustees were present. *The meeting was quorate.*

ACTION

**ITEM 2 – MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON
4 JUNE 2025**NMS (2025) 3rd Mtg

2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 4 June 2025 were **approved**.

ITEM 3 – MATTERS ARISING

3.1 Matters arising from the last meeting had been addressed within the pre-meeting session.

ITEM 4 – DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

4.1 Several Trustees declared that they were Fellows of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, in relation to Item 15 of the agenda.

ITEM 5 – DIRECTOR'S REPORT TO TRUSTEES

NMS (2025) 26

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

Impact

- In July, we launched the *Museum Tram* which will see the museum liveried tram running from Edinburgh Airport to Newhaven for two years. It encourages travellers to 'step inside' and experience some fascinating and fun facts about the national collection.
- The recent acquisition of the Carnoustie Bronze Age Hoard was announced in August and received wide news coverage across the UK.

Digital Media

- Our social media presence has continued to grow with 14% increase in followers across our social media channels compared to last year.

Public Programmes

- In August we organised two large-scale ceilidhs in the Grand Gallery plus a silent disco, Scottish karaoke, temporary tattoos, 'Scottish or Not-ish' object handling and craft.
- The Australian Maritime Museum in Sydney has confirmed their wish to host Treasures of the Viking Age: The Galloway Hoard, following Melbourne, from 28 May to 11 October 2026.

People

- The new Management Development Programme – *Managing Well: Creating Thriving, Inclusive Teams* launches in November.

ITEM 6 – FINANCIAL REPORT**NMS (2025) 27**

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

6.2 In addition to the report, Trustees received a presentation regarding the current position of the Pay Award negotiations.

ITEM 7 – CORPORATE RISK REGISTER**NMS (2025) 28**

7.1 Keith Pentland, (Director of Finance and Resources), presented the Corporate Risk Register that had been circulated. He advised that this was reviewed formally by the Audit and Risk Committee at every meeting and was reviewed by the Executive Team twice a year.

7.2 Following some discussion and review, the Board **approved** the updated Corporate Risk Register.

ITEM 8 – COLLECTIONS AND RESEARCH REPORT**NMS (2025) 29**

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

ITEM 9 – ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS**NMS (2025) 30**

9.1 Keith Pentland, (Director of Finance and Resources), presented the Annual Report and Accounts that had been circulated.

9.2 Following some discussion and review, the Board **approved** the Annual Report and Accounts and expressed thanks to the team for all their work in producing these.

ITEM 10 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: ANNUAL REPORT**NMS (2025) 31**

10.1 Ruth Gill, (Director of Public Programmes), presented the Sustainable Annual Report which had been circulated.

10.2 Following some discussion and review the Board commended Ruth and the team on progress and **approved** the Sustainable Annual Report and its publication.

ITEM 11 – GIFT ACCEPTANCE POLICY**NMS (2025) 32**

11.1 Trustees welcomed Jess Hogg, (Head of Development), to the meeting, who presented the Gift Acceptance Policy that had been circulated.

11.2 Following some discussion and review, the Board **approved** the Gift Acceptance Policy and Procedure and its publication.

ITEM 12 – BOARD COMMITTEES**Finance Committee**

12.1 The Chair noted that the draft minutes of the Finance Committee meetings held on 27 May 2025 and of 4 September 2025 had been circulated.

NMS Enterprises Ltd Board

12.2 The Chair noted that the draft minutes of the NMS Enterprises Ltd Board meeting held on 6 June 2025 had been circulated.

Estates Committee

12.3 The Chair noted that the draft minutes of the Estates Committee meeting held on 11 June 2025 had been circulated.

Collections Development Committee

12.4 The Chair noted that the draft minutes of the Collections Development Committee meeting held on 17 June 2025 had been circulated.

12.5 Trustees noted that Richard Oram had taken on the role of Chair of this committee, and thanked Beth McKillop for her commitment to this role to date.

People & Remuneration Committee

12.5 The Chair noted that the draft minutes of the People & Remuneration Committee meeting held on 20 August 2025 had been circulated.

Audit and Risk Committee

12.6 The Chair noted that the draft minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held on 10 September 2025 had not been circulated and invited the Chair to give a verbal update.

Nominations and Governance

12.7 The Chair advised that the committee would be focusing on the recruitment of two new Trustees next year and invited Trustees to put forward their thoughts to him.

ITEM 13 – BOARD OF TRUSTEE MEETING DATES 2025-28**NMS (2025) 33**

13.1 The Board noted the Board meeting dates for 2025-28.

ITEM 14 – FORWARD PROGRAMME OF BUSINESS

NMS (2025) 34

14.1 The Board noted the forward programme of business.

ITEM 15 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS

15.1 The Board discussed the NMS Nomination to Council for the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland.

15.2 The Trustees who had declared an interest abstained, and the remainder proposed, and unanimously **agreed**, Dr Sam Alberti, Director of Collections, as National Museums Scotland representative on the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland.

ITEM 16 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING

16.1 The next meeting would be held on Wednesday 26 November 2025 at the National Museum of Scotland.