



The Morris Federation

THE MORRIS FEDERATION

MINUTES OF THE 45th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Held on Saturday 26th September 2020 on the Zoom Online Platform from 1600 hours

<https://www.morrisfed.org.uk/agm>

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INTRODUCTION

Pauline Woods-Wilson (President) opened the meeting at 1606 hours and welcomed the attendees and those viewing the live stream on the Morris Federation YouTube channel. She explained that as this is the first time of using this platform she may need to consult with others on the committee, during which there may be short periods of silence. As the meeting now is not to be recorded, participants were asked not to record it themselves. She explained how to vote in an in-meeting poll; raise a hand; chat to a host.

A quorum was declared on Zoom, there being more than 15 group members.

ATTENDEES

Group Members:

Fee Lock (Secretary) read out those teams attending:

Ansley Morris	Hexham Morris Men	Poacher Morris
Armaleggan	Hobos Morris	Prize Old Mummers
Berkshire Bedlam	Hook Eagle	Red Stags Morris
Beverley Garland Dancers	Huginn & Muninn	Rights & Lefts
Black Diamond Mixed	Hurst Morris People	Ripon Spur Rapper
Cotswold Morris	Invicta	Rivington Morris
Black Gate Morris	Jackstraws Morris	Rumworth Morris
Black Hart	Jerusalem Jammers	Ryknild Rabble
Boss Morris	Kirtlington Morris	Seven Champions/Seven Sisters
Cardiff Morris	Knowle Morris	Sheffield City Morris
Chiltern Hundreds	Mad Jack's Morris	Sheffield Steel Rapper
Chinewrde	Malkin Morris	Shrewsbury Morris
Clerical Error	Maltby Sword	Silhill Morris
Cockleshell Clog	Mary Rose & Royal George	Silkstone Greens NW Morris
Customs & Exiles	Street Dancers	Somerset Morris
Ditchling Morris	Mason's Apron NW	Stone the Crows Border Morris
Ebor Morris	Medlock Rapper	Stony Stratford Mummers
Enigma Border Morris	Milkmaid Molly	Taepas Tump NW
Exmoor Border Morris	Misfit Molly	Tatters & Tails
Five Rivers Morris	Mockbeggar Morris	The Wild Hunt
Fool's Gambit	Mortimer's Morris	Tinners
Forest of Dean Morris	Nancy Butterfly	Treacle Eater Clog
Full Moon Morris	New Esperance Morris	Trentside Holmes Morris
Furness Morris	Old Glory Molly Dancers & Musicians	Windsor Morris
Gaorsach Rapper	Old Palace Clog	Winkleigh Morris
Garston Gallopers	Otter Morris	Wreckers Morris
Glory of the West	Outside Capering Crew	Wyld Morris
Great Western Morris	Persephone Women's Morris	
Hannah's Cat	Phoenix Morris	
Harlequin Women's Morris		

Individual members:

Sally Wearing, Honorary Member

Bev Lane, Honorary Member

Val Parker, Honorary Member

Morris Federation Committee:

Pauline Woods-Wilson, President, The Morris Federation

Fee Lock, Secretary, The Morris Federation

Jenny Everett, Treasurer, The Morris Federation

Jerry West, Notation Officer, The Morris Federation

Sam Ross, Newsletter Editor, The Morris Federation

Mike Everett, Archive Officer, The Morris Federation

Morris Federation Co-opted Committee:

Dan Watford, IT Administrator, The Morris Federation

Sally Smith, Communications Officer, The Morris Federation

Visitors:

Jen Cox, Chair, Open Morris (*)

Katy Spicer, Chief Executive, EFDSS

Michael Stimpson, Insurance Officer (working for all three Morris Organisations)

Eddie Worrall, former Squire, The Morris Ring (*)

(*) Eddie Worrall and Jen Cox also acted as Tellers to count the votes.

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Fee Lock (Secretary) read out the list of apologies for absence:

Group Members:

Acorn Morris

Anstey Royale Chalfont

Aurora

Babylon Morris

Beetlecrushers Clog and
Step Dance Group

Betty Lupton's Ladle Laikers

Bideford Phoenix Morris

Bishops Morris

Black Annis

Black Bess Border Morris

Black Dragon Morris

Black Sheep North Dales
Morris

Black Swan Border Morris

Boekka

Bootstrap Border Morris

Carn Brea Morris

Charnwood Clog

Chingford Morris Men

City Clickers

Clausentum Morris

Clogarhythm

Cricket on The Hearth

Crook Morris

Dancing Spires Rapper

Dark Horse Morris

Dartmoor Border Morris

Dead Horse Morris & the
Broomdashers

Domesday Morris

Dorset Buttons

Dorstep Clog

Downes on Tour

England's Glory Ladies
Morris

Fiddlesticks Northwest Clog

Furness Clog Dancers

Fylde Coast Cloggers

Galliard Folk Dancers

Glorishears of Brummagem

Green Man Sword

Grimspound Border	Manor Mill Morris	Ripon City Morris Dancers
Hadrian Clog	Marlings Morris	Rockhopper Morris
Hammersmith Morris	Medusa Gothic	Royal Oak Morris of Eydon
Harberton Navy	Mehalah Morris	Rumburgh Morris
Haughley Hoofers	Minster Strays	Sarum Morris
Herring Gals	Mish Mash Morris	St Albans Morris
Hertfordshire Holly	Mutineers	Strictly Clog
Hexhamshire Lasses	Nonesuch Morris	Temporary Measured
Highside Longsword	North Star Rapper and Clog	The Flag and Bone Gang
Hornbeam Molly	Northgate Rapper	The King's Morris
Isambard's Gasket Rats	Orchard Morris Project	The Morris Men of Little Egypt
Kinfauns Step Dancers	Owlswick Morris	Three Shires Clog
Knaresborough Mummers	Pateley Longsword	Three Spires Morris
Knights of King Ina	Pigsty Morris	Three's a Crowd
Leading Lights Morris	Plum Jerkum Border Morris	Westmorland Cloggies
Leven Sword	Pump House Clog Morris	Westrefelda
Lymm Morris Dancers	Rag Morris	Whip the Cat Rapper and Clog
Mabel Gubbins Rapper	Rampant Rooster Morris Dancers	Willington Morris
Madder Mill Molly	Richmond Castle Clog	
Maldon Greenjackets		

Individual Members:

Jameson Wooders

Peter Luckin

2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting on 28th September 2019 are available online at <https://www.morrisfed.org.uk/agm/>. These were taken as read. They were proposed correct by Jerry West (Berkshire Bedlam) and seconded by Melanie Barber (Rivington Morris).

There being no discussion on the floor, a poll was called:

In favour	12
Against	0
Abstentions	28

Pauline Woods-Wilson (President) signed a copy and showed it to the meeting.

3 MATTERS ARISING

None.

4 ANNUAL REPORTS

These had been previously circulated and taken as read. They are reproduced as Appendix 1 below.

In discussions on the Treasurer's report:

Jenny Everett (Treasurer) proposed that "current members applying for renewal for 2021 may do so at zero cost". For clarity, they would still have to apply for membership in the normal way, but the cost would be zero. The rates for those who are not currently members would be unchanged from this year at £35 for Group membership, £22 for Individual, Associate & Overseas, and £10 Junior Group.

The motion was proposed by Virginia Crew (Malkin Morris) and seconded by Diane Moody (New Esperance).

There being no discussion on the floor, a poll was called:

In favour	69
Against	0
Abstentions	4

The proposal was CARRIED.

5 MOTIONS

Pauline Woods-Wilson (President) explained that all Motions on the Agenda were constitutional changes and all required 2/3 majority (i.e. twice the number of votes in favour as against). All proposers and seconders must be present; abstentions will be noted but not included. No additional Motions will be accepted. If anyone raises an Amendment, then this Amendment to the Motion will be voted on and needs a simple majority to be passed. If passed, the Amendment is applied to the Motion and this becomes the Substantive Motion. The Substantive Motion is then voted on and needs a 2/3rd majority to change our Constitution or Standing Orders. However, Amendments that simply nullify the Motion or alter it beyond its original intention are not acceptable (those disagreeing with the Motion should simply vote against it).

The 'Constitution and Standing Orders' will be reviewed over the coming months, and members are invited to make their thoughts known to the committee for bringing back to a General Meeting for debate and decisions.

The decision on all Motions was embargoed until 2100 hours (later in the meeting changed to 2200 hours) to give an opportunity for the Committee to broadcast the membership by email before it was mentioned on social media.

Those wishing to Speak were limited to 2 minutes each and asked to give their name and the name of their team.

The President finished by saying that although we can't all agree on everything, at the end of the day we all love our hobby and we are all doing what we think is best; inevitably, there will be some strong views expressed, so we ask that everyone should be considerate of everyone else's views.

MOTION 1

Proposed by:	Jenny Everett (Treasurer)
Seconded by:	Fee Lock (Secretary)
Proposal (give description, e.g. proposed change to the Constitution from x to y):	
<p>Proposed change to the CONSTITUTION to add two sections regarding finance and dissolution of The Morris Federation (shown in red).</p> <p>7 FINANCIAL All funds and assets of The Morris Federation shall be used only for the furtherance of its objectives. No funds nor assets shall be transferred to the Officers, nor any individual, nor member sides for their personal use.</p> <p>8 DISSOLUTION On the dissolution of The Morris Federation, all of the funds and assets shall be transferred to charitable or not-for-profit organisations having the same or equivalent objectives as The Morris Federation and an equivalent prohibition on personal use of funds or assets once transferred. For the avoidance of doubt, none of The Morris Federation's funds or assets shall be transferred to its Officers, or individuals, or member sides. Pending distribution, the Officers of The Morris Federation shall hold any funds in trust.</p>	
Rationale (give a reasoned argument for the proposed change):	
<p>In discussions with other Organisations regarding funding of projects (archival, general arts, and educational ones) via grant applications, it has become clear that our Constitution, as it stands, does not meet certain external criteria. This is not a deficiency in the current Constitution, merely the fact that an external body such as the National Lottery has certain requirements that we have not had to consider to date.</p> <p>The central issue is that our Constitution should prohibit personal gain by the Officers and members of The Morris Federation. Also, that if The Morris Federation were to be dissolved, that the money would not be distributed to Officers or members. These are fairly obvious requirements to prevent fraud in the use of grant funds awarded. "Personal use" of funds and assets excludes the acquisition of Morris Federation assets or reimbursement of legitimate expenses.</p> <p>In order to allow The Morris Federation to pursue such funding opportunities, it is proposed that these two clauses are added to the 'General' section of the Constitution.</p> <p>The committee wishes to make clear that the proposed changes will not affect the expenses paid to the committee of The Morris Federation: our accounts are scrutinised annually and the membership is entitled to ask for them to be audited, should such a need arise. There is no intention to dissolve The Morris Federation.</p>	

Discussion moved to the floor:

Melanie Barber (Rivington Morris) asked what would happen if there was no suitable charitable organisation with similar aims? Jerry West (Notation Officer) said we would cross that bridge when we came to it. The intention is to distribute the funds, and it would be for the person, or organisation dissolving the Morris Federation, to find a suitable charity. Melanie was content with this.

There being no further discussion, a vote was called for:

Voting:

In Favour	1704
Against	13
Abstentions	221

Motion 1 was CARRIED.

MOTION 2 – WITH AMENDMENT

An Amendment to Motion 2 has been raised, and agreed with the original Proposer and Seconder. The Committee proposed that this now becomes the Substantive Motion to be voted on.

Motion Proposed by:	Jerry West (Notation Officer)
Motion Seconded by:	Pauline Woods-Wilson (President)
Amendment Proposed by:	Boss Morris
Amendment Seconded by:	Pauline Woods-Wilson (President)
Proposal (give description, e.g. proposed change to the Constitution from x to y):	
<p>Proposed change to the CONSTITUTION at Section 7 (currently 7; to be re-numbered to 9 providing that Motion 1 is agreed; failing that to remain at 7) to broaden the Aims of the Morris Federation; the original change is shown in red; the Amendment is shown in light blue.</p> <p>79 AIMS The aims of The Morris Federation shall be:</p> <p>a) To encourage and maintain interest in the practice of Morris dancing To encourage and promote morris and related activities, for anyone who wants to participate or to spectate</p> <p>b) To provide a channel of communication between member sides</p> <p>c) To encourage the improvements of standards of dancing and related activities among its members</p> <p>d) To encourage an environment for morris and related activities where all feel safe, welcomed and respected, regardless of race, colour, ethnic or national origins, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, age, ability or disability, political or religious beliefs, or economic status age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage or civil partnership; pregnancy or maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation.</p>	
Rationale (give a reasoned argument for the proposed change):	
<p>Firstly although "Morris" has always had a broad interpretation, the Committee feel that the use of the term "Morris dancing" may now be insufficiently inclusive given the varied interests of our member teams. It has always been accepted that other (non-dancing) activities done by Morris teams in their normal performance (such as a Mumming Play) are part of "the Morris", and by extension The Morris Federation has always welcomed teams that perform (e.g.) only Mummers' Plays. And, of course, teams have always self-identified not as Morris dancers but as Molly dancers, or Street dancers, or Sword dancers or as "anything but not Morris!". Finally, in today's global culture, we are also seeing both local (UK) performance taken from "foreign" traditional dance culture and the fusion between Morris and these other dance forms.</p> <p>The Committee is keen to ensure that these realities are reflected in the aims of The Morris Federation and to ensure we have the leeway to encourage and support a wide range of "Morris-like" customs and activities. The challenge is finding a term that encompasses all these forms and others yet to emerge. It was felt that trying to list all the different ways in which teams self-identify would be a task fraught with difficulties!</p> <p>The term "and related activities" is intended to accommodate all these forms. It must not be interpreted as dismissive, or to suggest that such activities are in any way "less" than Morris, but rather genuinely to encompass a fluid and wide ranging family of performance styles.</p> <p>Secondly, The Morris Federation's Equal Opportunities Policy (2006) in the Members Manual, Point 4, states: "Anyone representing the Morris Federation, whether contractor or, volunteer or elected committee member shall be expected to act in that position with courtesy and respect to anyone with whom they have</p>	

dealings on Morris Federation business, regardless of race, colour, ethnic or national origins, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, age, ability or disability, political or religious beliefs, economic status or class, and to adopt this Equal Opportunities Policy.”

We seek to encourage the same behaviour throughout our community of morris and related activities, for participants and spectators alike.

Rationale for the AMENDMENT (give a reasoned argument for the proposed change):

The amendment to part c) would cover the ‘related activities’ mentioned in part a), such as, but not limited to, music, fooling & beasting.

The amendment to part d) would align with the 9 protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010.

References:

Equality Act 2010 Legislation: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/4> and government guidance on discrimination: <https://www.gov.uk/discrimination-your-rights>

Jerry West (Notation Officer) explained that some teams who probably would not call themselves “Morris” are already members, and discussions took place around extending the definition of activities (part a) to included ‘related activities’. This allows different types of street dancing which may or may not be called Morris – fusion – and Nepalese Ghurkhas, dancing in England, who are not under any other organisation. In considering this matter, the Committee desired to make equality statements part of the constitution, as well as drafting the Equal Opportunities Policy.

This resulted in the amendments shown in RED above.

The committee subsequently received a proposed amendment from Boss Morris (shown in blue above) to incorporate not just dancing but music, fooling, beasting, etc, through the new words shown in blue under part c; and to align our wording with that of the Equality Act 2010 (shown in blue under part d).

Pauline Woods-Wilson (President) then explained to the meeting that the Committee had very recently received a further amendment from Bob Barker (Ripon Spur Rapper) to remove the list in part d) and simplify it to:

d) To encourage an environment for morris and related activities where all feel safe, welcomed and respected.

The stated rationale being that lists [of characteristics] were not appropriate, for they exclude items of interest whilst focusing un-necessarily on specific elements rather than the underlying principle.

A poll was conducted on the Amendment proposed by Ripon Spur Rapper:

Teams

In favour	59
Against	2
Abstentions	5

Individuals

In favour	4
Against	0
Abstentions	0

A point of information was raised from the floor asking for confirmation as to what the meeting was voting on. John New (Cockleshell Clog) replied from the floor saying that the vote was changing the Motion – and that the meeting would later need to vote on whether it accept the amended Motion itself.

Pauline Woods-Wilson (President) explained we can either continue with the motion as amended by Ripon Spur and vote in-meeting, or if we think it has become a massively different Motion we can do a postal vote. She then asked if anyone objected to the meeting considering the amended motion. Simon Worledge (Silhill Morris) suggested that providing the original proposer was happy with the amendment, we should proceed at the meeting rather than conduct a postal vote. The proposer of the original motion, Jerry West (Notation Officer) and the proposer of the first amendment, Boss Morris, were both content to go ahead.

Vaughan Grandin (Huginn & Muninn) wanted clarification on the postal votes cast for the motion as originally presented on the AGM papers. Pauline Woods-Wilson (President) explained that these votes are now void as the motion has been amended.

The Motion as amended by Ripon Spur thus became the new Substantive Motion:

“That the aims of The Morris Federation shall be:

- a) To encourage and promote morris and related activities, for anyone who wants to participate or to spectate**
- b) To provide a channel of communication between member sides**
- c) To encourage the improvements of standards of dancing and related activities among its members**
- d) To encourage an environment for morris and related activities where all feel safe, welcomed and respected”**

Discussion having ceased, a poll was called on the Substantive Motion

Teams

In Favour	76
Against	2
Abstentions	0

Individuals

In Favour	5
Against	0
Abstentions	0

Totals

In Favour	765
Against	20
Abstentions	0

On a point of information, Simon Worledge (Silhill Morris) expressed concern that he had thought he was still voting on the decision to amend. In an enquiry to the floor, two people admitted misunderstanding the nature of the vote. Neither wanted to call for a new vote, but Simon asked the officers to be very careful in the conduct of later votes.

Motion 2 was CARRIED.

MOTION 3

Proposed by:	Cockleshell Clog
Seconded by:	Sheffield City Morris
Proposal (give description, e.g. proposed change to the Constitution from x to y):	
Proposed change to the STANDING ORDERS at Section 5 to add the line (shown in red): Unless specifically stated elsewhere, 'Resolutions' made by General Meeting, AGM or EGM, shall take effect immediately upon being made. Thus it would become: 5 MOTIONS AND AMENDMENTS The first proposition on any subject shall be known as the Original Motion and all succeeding propositions on that subject shall be called amendments. Every motion and amendment must be moved and seconded by members actually present at the meeting and, unless impossible, all motions shall be notified in advance and included on the agenda. Unless specifically stated elsewhere, 'Resolutions' made by General Meeting, AGM or EGM, shall take effect immediately upon being made.	
Rationale (give a reasoned argument for the proposed change):	
This has been the custom-and-practice over many years. This Motion is to make it explicit in the Constitution.	

Proposing the Motion, John New (Cockleshell Clog) said that some resolutions need to take effect immediately; so unless the motion specifically states there is a delay, we should assume immediate effect.

Seconding the Motion, Sheffield City Morris seconded but did not wish to say anything more.

Discussion then moved to the floor:

Speaking against the motion, Bob Barker (Ripon Spur Rapper) said that timings should be part of motion proposal procedures or else resolutions risk being retrospective, giving no chance for members to comply. He asked if the constitution needed looking at as a whole; possibly the matter of when resolutions come into effect should be a standing order?

On a point of information, Geoff Roberts (Hexham Morris) asked whether amendments to motions require a team's representative to always cast the full 10 votes in favour or against [the amendment]? Pauline Woods-Wilson (President) said that split votes are possible, although Geoff said that some teams may feel that isn't appropriate. Diane Moody (New Esperance) suggested that this allows the representative to interpret the vote on behalf of their team. Val Parker (Honorary Member), who created the voting system, said that the intention had been that representatives should cast their ten votes in the same proportion as they think their team members would vote.

Discussion having ended, a vote was called on the original Motion:

Final votes:

In Favour	1647.5
Against	51.0
Abstentions	240.5

Motion 3 was CARRIED.

MOTION 4

Proposed by:	Cockleshell Clog
Seconded by:	Sheffield City Morris
Proposal (give description, e.g. proposed change to the Constitution from x to y):	
Proposed change to the CONSTITUTION at Section 2 MEMBERSHIP to append the following paragraph (shown in red): Membership, or renewal of Membership, is at the discretion of The Committee AND by payment of annual subscription.	
Rationale (give a reasoned argument for the proposed change):	
It is custom-and-practice that membership is on an annual basis. This Motion is to make this explicit in the Constitution. On the Application/Renewal form, which has been in use over many years, it states “The Morris Federation committee reserves the right to decline membership of the Morris Federation”. This Motion is to make it explicit in the Constitution.	

Proposing the Motion, John New (Cockleshell Clog) explained that the current constitution does not define how a member is accepted into the Morris Federation. Although payment of subscriptions is clearly required, membership should still be, as stated on the application form, at the discretion of the committee.

Because of the Joint Morris Organisations’ decision to put to its constituent organisations’ members a proposal to disallow full face black face paint, if a member side should bring the Morris Federation into disrepute by doing something illegal, the committee can decide against allowing that member to resubscribe

Seconding the Motion, Pete Johnson (Sheffield City) said that the committee has always had the discretionary right, but this motion makes that principle explicit in the constitution.

Discussion then moved to the floor:

Fee Lock (Secretary) said that one of the major problems in having an organisation that has hitherto allowed pretty much anyone to join, providing they’re Morris dancers, is how do you define ‘Morris’? Without being thought of being too flippant, I’ve been Morris dancing since I was 14 and lost count of the times anyone I know has been able to define ‘Morris’ – many late night ales and parties have ended in an intense discussion at 3am on the subject.

More practically, however, is our very favourable public liability insurance. One of the successes of the Joint Morris Organisations has been to have a bespoke insurance policy – when I first started there were three, and they had obscure aspects including marine risk, if I remember correctly.

There is a precedent for refusing membership and the committee has made that decision in the past, though I can only think of a small handful of groups, and mostly they’ve been dance display teams that are probably more similar to the kinds of groups belonging to the EFDSS, so we’ve suggested they try there. Last year Jenny Everett, our treasurer, prompted a discussion point on whether she was broadly keeping up with the expectation of the membership about whom we have as members and whom we recommend they try elsewhere (you can read that in the minutes).

With the introduction of no-win, no-fee insurance policies, many public liability insurance policies became hugely expensive, and it prompted many of the “carnival morris” sides to ask to join. Without going into the history of carnival morris here, the issue was that it is mainly performed by under-16s. We can have a small number of minors in our sides, providing that they have a responsible adult with them, but we can’t really have large numbers of groups made up of children, as it would alter the terms of the policy we have with a consequent rise in costs.”

Bob Barker (Ripon Spur Rapper) said that there were no criteria or appeal system included. Pauline Woods-Wilson (President) accepted this and committed the officers to ensure this was brought forward at a future meeting.

Speaking against Vaughan Grandin (Huginn & Muninn) said that if people want to join a club where members have to be selected as such, they can join the Morris Ring.

Jim Wheatley (Garston Gallopers) said that there may need to be gatekeepers as there are 'typical British or English groups'; plus, having passed a Motion to open up to more than just Morris, we should be able to vet who comes in.

Iain Baines (Otter Morris) said that we already vet those coming in; would this apply to existing sides? He thought it was not well-worded. Pauline Woods-Wilson (President) confirmed that renewal of members, by definition, applies to existing members. Pauline then asked if Iain could suggest another form of words. Iain suggested suspending a side until the next AGM. Pauline responded that it was not clear what that actually implied for the member concerned and that the committee may need to act more quickly. Furthermore members are entitled to know the basis on which the committee operates and have some means of redress, and that means putting it into the constitution so it is not just custom and practice.

Tom Wright (Fool's Gambit) said that we need a way to refuse membership. The members have voted in a committee to act on their behalf; if members are unhappy with the committee, they should vote them out.

Discussion having ended, a vote was called on the original Motion:

Final votes for Motion 4:

In favour	1600.0
Against	96.0
Abstentions	249.5

Motion 4 was CARRIED.

MOTION 5

Proposed by:	Cockleshell Clog
Seconded by:	Sheffield City Morris
Proposal (give description, e.g. proposed change to the Constitution from x to y):	
Proposed change to the CONSTITUTION at Section 2 MEMBERSHIP to append the following paragraph (shown in red): Members shall support the aims of The Morris Federation as stated in the Constitution and shall abide by the standing orders and rules of The Morris Federation. Members shall not do anything to adversely affect the aims of The Morris Federation or liable to bring The Morris Federation into disrepute.	
Rationale (give a reasoned argument for the proposed change):	
On the Application/Renewal form, which has been in use over many years, members agree to the following Declaration. This Motion is to make this explicit in the Constitution. “Declaration We accept the aims of The Morris Federation which are: a) To encourage and maintain interest in the practice of Morris dancing b) To provide a channel of communication between member sides c) To encourage the improvements of standards of dancing among its members We agree not to bring the Morris Federation and/or the morris world into disrepute e.g. by acting in breach of any current legislation.” The Constitution includes ‘rules’ i.e. Standing Orders and General Policies (which includes Resolutions passed). The Members Manual Section 2.3 on General Policies states: “In addition to items dictated by the Constitution, there are other areas of policy or principle, which have arisen either out of Resolutions passed at AGMs in the past ... or which have become established through what might be referred to as “custom and practice”.”	

Proposing the Motion, John New (Cockleshell Clog) outlined this as bringing the constitution into line with custom and practice. If this is on the application form to join the Morris Federation, it should be a rule. The second sentence includes illegal activity, including blacking-up.

The President intervened here to state that full-face black face paint is not illegal, per se.

Seconding the Motion, Pete Johnson (Sheffield City) said that this is a clarification and extension.

Discussion then moved to the floor:

Bob Barker (Ripon Spur Rapper) said that most societies of which he’s been a member, agreeing to follow the constitution is sufficient. He also felt that the word ‘liable’ is dangerous, as it means looking into the future. He felt that the word fails the test of clarity. The application form should be looked at more explicitly to say that applicants should accept the constitution and standing orders.

Diane Moody (New Esperance) said there is a mismatch between the application form and the constitution, and the words, ‘current legislation’ on the form is too woolly. She thought this Motion goes too far and that the constitution is ripe for review.

Simon Worledge (Silhill Morris) took issue with John New’s earlier comments and wanted him to withdraw the statement that blacking up is illegal. John refused, suggesting that such behaviour could fall under Section 5, Public Order Act 1985 i.e. that an act can be an offence if threatening or abusive words, behaviour or visible representation which is threatening or abusive, occurs within someone’s sight or hearing. With neither party willing to concede the point, the President moved the discussion forward.

Val Parker (Honorary Member) said she had written much of the constitution and pointed out that it had been drawn up largely with Morris Federation events in mind and that the behaviour of member clubs was covered by acceptance of the aims of the Morris Federation.

Bob Dunlop (Kirtlington Morris) said that it needed further thought as the committee may not have considered the full implications of the wording proposed. He suggested it was returned to the committee for further consideration and Pauline Woods-Wilson (President) agreed this was an option.

Bob Barker (Ripon Spur Rapper) suggested [but did not wish at the time to propose] deleting the second half of the Motion as the application form was the issue, not the constitution. Bob read out the statement published by the Ministerial Support Team of the Department of Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) dated 17th January 2017, expressing support for traditional art forms and stating that the DCMS could see no racial connotations linked with common practices (including by implication, full-face black makeup).

The President consulted Jerry West (Notation Officer) who suggested that if the proposer did not wish to withdraw the Motion, and Ripon Spur Rapper did not wish to propose an amendment, then the meeting should proceed to a vote.

John New (Cockleshell Clog) confirmed that they stood by the Motion.

Vicky Deacon (Wyld Morris) then moved to table the motion (i.e. returning the Motion to the committee). This was seconded by Melanie Barber (Rivington Morris).

A poll was conducted: that the Motion be referred back to the committee with no further action or vote on the Motion:

Final votes (poll):

In favour	113
Against	11
Abstentions	4

Motion 5 is therefore REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE.

MOTION 6

Proposed by:	New Esperance Morris
Seconded by:	Glory of the West
Proposal (give description, e.g. proposed change to the Constitution from x to y):	
<p>Preamble</p> <p>That the organisation believes that it is neither necessary nor appropriate for any team, participants in a team or individual member of The Morris Federation to wear full face black or other skin tone makeup irrespective of the intentions that they may have.</p> <p>Proposed RESOLUTION to the meeting</p> <p>From 1st January 2021 no member team, participants in a team, or individual member shall use any solid full face coloured makeup which could be taken by a reasonable observer as likely to imitate or parody a skin colour different from their own.</p> <p>Actions Arising</p> <p>By the 31st December 2020, all member teams and individuals shall have reviewed their policy on the use of full face black or other skin tone makeup in line with the current guidance on Face Paint produced by The Morris Federation. From 1st January 2021 The Morris Federation shall refuse the future membership of, and shall not renew the membership of, any team or individual that chooses to wear solid full face coloured makeup which could be taken by a reasonable observer as likely to imitate or parody a skin colour different from their own.</p>	
Rationale (give a reasoned argument for the proposed change):	
<p>This is an opportune moment to consider the messages that, however unwittingly, our community generates through the continued use of full face black makeup, and equally appropriate to assess the effects other makeup choices may have on other groups.</p> <p>It is generally acknowledged that non-verbal cues send out signals that are readily interpreted by others. Why else do we dress more formally for a job interview or "dress-up" for a date night? These non-verbal cues also carry more weight. If sight contradicts sound, people will believe what they see, not what they hear.</p> <p>Many people make an assumption about others based on how they look, dress and speak, and are similarly intimidated, distressed or offended by certain groups, often without just cause, just because of their dress code. They might be pleasant, friendly individuals, but it takes time and effort to undo such assumptions - time and effort that we cannot, and should not, expect the casual audience to take.</p> <p>The performance of morris dancing often takes bystanders by surprise when we take over public spaces, pavements or pubs and pubs gardens, and it is our responsibility to ensure that the experience is positive for those who watch. We may bewilder, but should never alienate.</p> <p>We know that 'The Morris' is a 'broad church', one that is generally tolerant, where difference is acknowledged and diversity is welcomed. Why then do we in the 21st Century adopt a disguise that can cause distress to some and foster assumptions about us as an organisation, however misguided they are?</p> <p>We have always taken "the tradition" and moulded it to our purposes, discarding what is no longer useful and adopting what works for us. We invent new dances, write new tunes, adopt new costumes. It's time to be equally imaginative with our disguises.</p> <p>It is time to consign full face black makeup to history, and move forward. Black lives matter.</p>	

Pauline Woods-Wilson handed the Chair to Roger Kennington of Black Gate Morris to avoid a conflict of interest. The new Chair reiterated the President's earlier request for a respectful meeting.

Proposing the Motion, Diane Moody (New Esperance) presumed everyone had read the guidance page on the website and understood the rationale for the motion. It has taken months and months to distil the right words. The motion is as straightforward as possible. This is not a new discussion point; some

people think this is a response to the BLM – we support this – but we’ve wanted to do this for ages. Even though, in 2016 I [Diane Moody] stood up at the AGM and said that it was neither right nor sensible to risk opening up our teams and the Morris Federation to possible legal action, actually this is not about us.

Seconding the Motion, Christine Duff (Glory of the West) were very proud to second it: many people defend this practice on the basis that people don’t complain when they see full-face black make-up. However, if anyone has been in any kind of minority facing a large group of others, then it’s difficult to mount a challenge, and she has personal experience of this when blacking up. The argument that it is “traditional” can be countered in that traditions develop and can change. Our support for this motion was prompted by the younger people in our side, and if we want to remain relevant to, and recruit, young people, we need to address this and support the motion.

The remainder of the debate was moderated by the Chair to ensure alternating viewpoints were presented.

Speaking against the Motion, Vaughan Grandin (Huginn & Muninn)

We are a masked side and we make friends with others. This is about censoring people’s behaviour. You are doing this to your friends. We should be looking after people, not kicking them out. Other sides who are blacking-up are going through difficult times; should those sides be told to change? This is freedom of expression. If people don’t want to change, they shouldn’t be forced to.

Speaking for the Motion, Tom Besford (Medlock Rapper)

Danny Baker is a broadcaster and radio host. For a number of years, he’s had a long running joke with his fans where he posts pictures of chimpanzees with captions from the news. It’s a silly light-hearted game which his fans think is funny. When Meghan Markle and Prince Harry announced their new baby, he continued this regular in-joke and so posted a photo of a couple holding hands with a chimpanzee with a caption about the news of the royal baby, thinking nothing of how it might be perceived by those who weren’t in on his long-running joke. This obviously caused massive uproar [when his picture was taken as a racial slur on Meghan’s African-American heritage]. The intention behind his actions was wholly irrelevant to the consequence. And the consequence in this case was that he was sacked for the offence he caused. He later said his action was a genuine, naïve and catastrophic mistake. It’s possibly one of the hardest things to admit an error where you have inadvertently caused distress.

When Medlock Rapper were asked to host the JMO Day of Dance in 2019, one of the venues asked us if there would be dance sides with full blacked faces. They did not want to be associated with anything which might cause offence or alienate the public, regardless of the intention behind the actions of the sides performing. We acted quickly and restricted access to the event accordingly.

Morris is not historical re-enactment. It is a living tradition aimed at providing entertainment to the public. In order to keep it alive, we need positive public and societal engagement.

When society took a step forwards this year, the JMO moved with society through its decision to ban the use of full black face. We don’t live in a vacuum, it is important that the public engage positively with Morris in all its forms and when society moves, it is right that we move with it. I supported the JMO then and I support this motion now. If I found that my actions caused unintended hurt, upset or division; I would change my actions. That is what this motion does, and I hope you will all support it.

Speaking to abstain from the vote, Bob Barker (Ripon Spur Rapper)

He pointed out the problems with ‘cancel culture’ rather than doing something positive, and it bans, say, mumming teams having a proper Luddite, a Captain Swing and other Labour characters, and it doesn’t recognise certain traditions. By positive, he meant all traditions looking hard to see if any instances of black minstrelsy and removing them, any traditional single black colour traditions left (i.e. not just full black facing), e.g. going black and red for 2021 as positive support, etc. People won’t think of yellow as a problem in the current wording.

On a point of information, Keith Leech (Mad Jack’s Morris) is a member of three different organisations with the Morris Federation. In Hastings we have Jack in the Green, based on chimney sweeps, and we have relatives of chimney sweeps who smudge, also bonfire smudging. Is this acceptable [under the definition proposed in the Motion?

Roger Kennington (acting Chair) asked the Committee to clarify whether dressing up as a chimney sweep would appear to a reasonable observer to be a parody of a black-skinned person?

Jerry West (Notation Officer) said that the committee does not believe that smudging or camouflage could easily be taken for a racial parody, and that it is not the same as full face blacking up.

Speaking for the Motion, Sally Baxter (Clerical Error)

We are a Border Morris team based in Flintshire. We made the decision back in 2017 to stop using black face paint and would like to share our reasons, which we think are relevant to this motion.

We'd been debating the issue for some time, and it hasn't been easy. Many people aren't worried by black face paint, but some are - some people are upset, angry, and even abusive. Individual members had been verbally attacked. We'd been asked not to dance near the Museum of Slavery in Liverpool. This wasn't just in the UK; we've faced similar issues in other countries and other cultures.

This had not happened often, but it was a growing concern for us.

It wasn't an easy discussion. There were strong feelings from all perspectives. However, we took the stance in the discussions that didn't assume that those who wanted to continue with black paint were racist, nor that other views were political correctness gone mad or cancel culture. We tried to respect each other's position.

Others have talked about many of the issues - "tradition" - and possible influences on that tradition; the impact of the disguise in our performance; how black face paint is perceived, rightly or wrongly. We also discussed the personal impact and possible repercussions of being seen, and photographed or filmed, wearing black face paint or with other teams with black face paint.

At the end of the day, we take part in Morris dancing for enjoyment, and we didn't want to cause upset or insult to people, particularly those who experience barriers and discrimination in so many other ways in their lives and in society.

We wanted all of us in the team to be comfortable with what we were doing, because performing together, enjoying it, and engaging well with our local communities is more important.

Fundamentally, we think it's time for the Morris community as a whole to take the same position.

Clerical Error unanimously supports motion 6 for these reasons.

Speaking against the Motion, John New (Cockleshell Clog) objected to the motion's wording and proposed an amendment to remove the words "which could be taken by a reasonable observer as".

The Chair asked for a second to support the amendment. None came forward and the proposal fell.

Speaking for the Motion, Melanie Barber (Rivington Morris)

I acknowledge that the motion had been proposed and seconded by Cotswold teams [i.e. who do not normally wear makeup of any sort], but it also addresses the discomfort other teams feel dancing with those that chose to wear full face paint. The motion, if passed, would also address the potential discomfort of some onlookers, and then there is the impact that passing the motion could have on the perception [by others] of the Morris world as a whole. Rivington Morris feel this is not just about those who dance the Morris.

Melanie said that when the team considered the matter there was one abstention on the basis that, much as the member agreed there was no longer a place for full black face paint, the motion was proposed and seconded by Cotswold teams, which they felt implied that one tradition could dictate to another. Whilst I [Melanie] can totally see that point of view, equally, having had many discussions with teams that have changed their disguise, and who have told me that they are not comfortable in proposing or seconding the motion, then we're kind of in a catch 22!

Speaking against the Motion, Judy Andrews (Old Glory Molly)

Old Glory have been a member of the Morris Federation for many years, and in that time we have been pleased to be a member of an organization that included Morris teams from all traditions. We were indeed grateful for the money that you gave us to help with our travel expenses when we travelled to Nottingham for the Dancing England event in January 2019, an event which celebrated the many, varied and different dance traditions still performing around the country.

We were therefore very surprised to find that our tradition is now possibly being ostracized from the Federation in a most unfair way. After much thought and discussion, we now think that the Morris Federation forthcoming AGM is unconstitutional in parts, for the following reasons.

1 .PRIOR SHARED DISCUSSION: Before the AGM papers had been put together there has been no consultation with any of the sides affected by Motion 6. Surely there should have been greater discussion and sharing of views, amongst the member sides before putting it to the vote?

2. BIAS: Not all sides have been properly informed and all communication from yourselves has been very biased, it is not possible therefore to have a fair result. We believe this hugely important motion should have been the subject of perhaps an EGM on a separate occasion. To make matters worse, an extra communication was later sent out to all sides from you, this again was very biased, and no affected side had a chance to send out an opposing view.

3. As all votes are to be collected before the meeting, there is now no chance for anyone to attend the AGM and offer an opposing view to your own which could affect the voting. This is most unfair to sides who believe their views should be heard, not just those of the sides who currently use the coloured disguises in question.

The voting system we believe is therefore unfair and thus the Management of Old Glory will abstain from the voting process.

Roger Kennington (acting Chair) asked if Old Glory considered this to be unconstitutional, which they did, and that they proposed that it should be referred back to the committee. Simon Worledge (Silhill Morris) seconded the proposal.

An in-meeting poll was conducted, that Motion 6 should be referred back to the committee and no further action or vote should take place.

MOTION 6 REFER BACK TO COMMITTEE AND NO FURTHER ACTION OR VOTE IF EVERYONE IN IS FAVOUR (poll):

In favour	140
Against	198
Abstentions	6

A simple majority being required to table a motion, and no such majority being achieved, debate continued.

Black Diamond Morris now offered to second Cockleshell Clog's proposal to amend the motion to remove the words "which could be taken by a reasonable observer as" and asked. Diane Moody (New Esperance if they would give way. New Esperance refused as they had taken legal advice and did not want to change the wording on this basis.

A poll was taken on the amendment, that the motion be amended to read:

From 1st January 2021 no member team, participants in a team, or individual member shall use any solid full face coloured makeup likely to imitate or parody a skin colour different from their own.

Poll:

In favour	12
Against	140

The amendment being rejected, debate continued on the original Motion.

Speaking for the Motion, Sue Rutland (Silkstone Greens) said that Morris can often seem detached from the modern world, but that doesn't mean it can't change. When I (Sue) started in the 1980s there was opposition to women dancing but now look at us. Entrenched views have altered – things change.

Now it is time to change again. The Black Lives Matter movement has brought racism into new prominence, and this has an impact on us. Of course, I don't believe that any team has racist intentions when it blacks up. That doesn't matter if the act of blacking-up is itself deemed to be racist.

In the wider community, blacking up is generally regarded as something very distasteful and entertainers and politicians have faced much criticism for it. We can't be immune to this shift.

The issue of black face dance teams is regularly discussed in mainstream media. It is part of the political debate whether we like it or not. The argument can go on forever but if we don't want to be passive pawns, we need to take control. Some festivals and authorities have already taken action in not allowing blacked-up teams to dance. We risk being seen as outdated and offensive. At worst we risk potential legal action to abolish blacking-up for dancing.

Audiences may not always understand our dancing, but they usually enjoy the spectacle and I don't want this to change. But some walk away wondering about the black make-up finding it distasteful or even offensive. Why would any team want to have that effect? Especially when there are alternatives to black make up that are equally valid in the tradition and take nothing away from the impact of the performance.

We can no longer justify the use of black face make-up. It is outdated, risks causing offence and turns the public and media against us. It is time to change!

Speaking against the Motion, Bob Dunlop (Kirtlington Morris) is not in favour of sanctions and wanted the committee to work with those sides who wish to black up. He felt this to be too draconian.

Speaking for the Motion, Katherine Hurdley (Gaorsach Rapper) said that she is not in favour of censorship and wanted to counter Vaughan Grandin's position that this is not restricting people's freedom of expression. We can't dance alone but equally we can't put the public off. We are not trying to ostracise our friends but to consider other people.

Speaking against the Motion, Anthony Doherty (Stone the Crows Border Morris) said that after the statue of Edward Colston was toppled in Bristol, they changed from full-face black make up, however, said that this is not about face paint and is more about sanctions. He was also not clear what constitutes a breach; is there an immediate dismissal or non-renewal? He found this to be disturbing.

Speaking for the Motion, Rosie Hood (Sheffield Steel Rapper) said that we can't think about ourselves in a vacuum – we are public-facing and we have to be relevant. We have to be aware that we live in a multi-cultural society and can't do things that we know offends and upsets others. We can't continue traditions that continue to offend people. We have to move forward to make ourselves relevant to our audience, and if anyone has ever been a minority, they will understand this. We need to stop filibustering and being pedantic about the wording.

Given the right of reply, Diane Moody (New Esperance) thanked everyone for their support and stressed that this is not about ourselves and we are not trying to unfriend people. New Esperance simply feel they cannot invite sides to dance in London if they black up, particularly as travel is by public transport. She has spoken to members of the committee who had contacted every side affected. This is about how people see us and we like to do traditional things; traditions move on.

Discussion having ended a vote was called on the Motion

Final votes for motion 6:

In favour	1416.5
Against	274.0
Abstentions	348.0

Motion 6 was CARRIED and takes effect immediately. Roger Kennington (Chair) thanked the meeting for respectful and thoughtful contributions.

The President resumed the Chair.

6 OTHER DISCUSSIONS

None notified.

7 ELECTION OF COMMITTEE

As per clause 4 of the Constitution, committee members (officers) must stand for re-election every three years (in rotation). Officers can stand again. This year, the officers standing for re-election are the Treasurer and the Archive Officer.

(a) Treasurer

Jenny Everett, the incumbent, is willing to stand again for a period of three years starting on 1st January 2021. There were no other candidates. The votes were as follows:

In favour	1505.5
Against	10.5
Abstentions	296.0

Jenny was duly elected.

(b) Archive Officer

Mike Everett, the incumbent, is willing to stand again for a period of three years starting on 1st January 2021. There were no other candidates. The votes were as follows:

In favour	1487.0
Against	10.5
Abstentions	304.5

Mike was duly elected.

Note re other posts

Under the 3-year tenure rule introduced in 2018 for Committee posts, the posts of Secretary and Notation Officer will expire on 31st December 2021 so they will be elected at the AGM in 2021. Posts of President and Newsletter Editor will expire on 31st December 2022 so will be elected at the AGM in 2022.

We have two co-opted posts which are one-year posts appointed by the Committee and renewable annually:

- Dan Watford of Wantsum Morris (a Morris Ring side) is taking over from Mike Adamson of Three's a Crowd who has stood down. They are currently in a handover period which is expected to last several months.
- Sally Smith (Silkstone Greens) has agreed to be co-opted as our Communications Officer, primarily for external communications.

We have retained Sally Wearing (Honorary Member) as our Advisor on Health & Safety (she is also the longest-serving President of the Morris Federation).

NB: All committee members may be challenged to an election at any AGM (or an EGM); the standing orders merely insist that the officers must stand every three years. The intention is to allow committee members the certainty of a limited term in office, should they wish, and to remind members of the Morris Federation that these positions are open to be contested.

8 DATE(S) OF FUTURE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING(S)

2021 – Saturday 25th September 2021 in Reading, courtesy of Customs & Exiles. [Post-meeting note: sadly, this has since been changed to it being an online AGM with no Day of Dance.]

2022 – in Darlington, courtesy of Black Diamond Mixed Cotswold Morris.

2023 – we need a volunteer! If you would like to organise the 2023 AGM Day of Dance, please get in touch with a member of the committee. Offers of hosting AGMs in further years will not be turned down!

9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(a) Liaison with DCMS about permitted sports

Sally Boardman (Armaleggan) said she thought the Morris Federation should be working proactively and persistently with the DCMS to add Morris dancing to the list of permitted sports. If grouse shooting and rambling for groups of over 30 is allowed, there is no reason why Morris should not, provided we have the right risk assessments in place. Other sports/cultural associations have got themselves on the list of permitted activities by demonstrating how this can be done in a safe way. Armaleggan have already completed a risk assessment on how to conduct its activities safely. We need the Morris Federation to stand up for our culture/sport and get us permission to practise and dance out to raise money for charity and beat reduce our increasing obesity brought on by enforced sedentary behaviour!! We understand that we may be going back into lockdown. Other sports have had a road map to return to activities.

Sally Wearing (Health & Safety Advisor) said that the recent changes to the restrictions in England mean that indoor sports are no longer exempt from the rule of six. There is therefore no advantage to classifying Morris as an organised team sport. The guidance for performing arts has, so far, been more suitable for Morris dancing, as it is intended to cover non-professionals both in rehearsal and performance; however, it has not yet been updated to reflect the recent changes.

Before the most recent changes, the JMO and EFDSS had reviewed what was required by the government to enable a competitive team sport to take place. Individual sports were only permitted if the relevant National Governing Body (NGB) prepared a sport specific action plan and related Covid-19 guidance, setting out what mitigations would be in place to reduce transmission risks. The mitigations had to be developed from risk assessing the sport; based on how often participants were closer together than 2m, how long for and in what configuration (i.e. face-to-face, back-to-back or side-by-side). The plans and guidance had to be submitted to the government for approval. If approved, the sport could only take place if the guidance was fully implemented, with activity taking place under the NGB's "oversight". This approach would not have been feasible for Morris dancing.

Sally Baxter (Clerical Error) thanked Sally Wearing for this information and pointed out that members in Wales have different rules and can have 30 people meeting outdoors. Shirley Dixon (Jackstraws) asked if there was any leeway in the exercise class route, but Sally Wearing explained that that had disappeared with the rule of 6. Anne Stewardson (Old Palace Clog) asked for positive communications and for the guidance to be on our website a week later, although Sally Wearing explained that interpreting the guidance is sometimes complex and time-consuming to summarise but that she understands the wish for positivity. Sally Boardman (Armaleggan) had asked for a sample risk assessment., Sally Wearing reported that she had nearly finished such an example when the guidance changed! Sally is currently waiting on the performing arts guidance and grassroots activities guidance to be updated by the government.

Linda Pound (Chinewrde) offered a vote of thanks to the Morris Federation for enabling Sally's work.

10 PRESENTATIONS AND VOTES OF THANKS

Votes of thanks are owed to Mike Adamson, co-opted IT Administrator, who introduced and maintained the membership database, which dramatically eased the work of the treasurer and the secretary. We are incredibly grateful for the time he was able to give to this. A Butterworth Badge will be presented to Mike Adamson at a future event when we can be together.

Special thanks are also owed to Sally Wearing, Health & Safety Advisor, for her ongoing work of interpreting the government guidance for Morris and related activities during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Sam Ross (Newsletter Editor) was instrumental in setting up the AGM, online voting, etc, and thanks to all our co-hosts for helping out. Pauline Woods-Wilson (President) thanked the Morris community for online quizzes, dancing, and keeping up our spirits during this difficult time. Melanie Barber (Rivington Morris) offered huge thanks to the Morris Federation committee as she knows how much work goes into an online AGM.

Pauline Woods-Wilson (President) thanked Roger Kennington for Chairing what is probably the most contentious debate facing members for many years and asked the meeting to accept an embargo on the results of the votes until 2200 hours so that members not present can be informed by broadcast email before discussions are had on message boards, as the committee knows that not everyone will be happy with Motion 6. She said that the committee would still like to talk to teams who are affected.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 2026 hours.

APPENDIX 1 - ANNUAL REPORTS

(a) President

Firstly, massive thanks to Melanie Barber for holding the role of President for six years. Under Melanie's watch, the newsletter was transformed into a glossy FedExtra, the web site transitioned into a slick and informative site, and the Sponsorship, Grants and Bursaries scheme launched. The membership records database was migrated to a new system which enabled an excellent online Teamfinder, plus managing members' records takes less time.

Talking of ex-Presidents, John Bacon of Ditchling Morris, and MF President from 2000 to 2003, passed away in December. He was made an honorary member for being instrumental in negotiating the exemption for "morris dancing and related music" in the Licensing Act 2003; in doing so he worked closely with The Morris Ring and Open Morris, bringing the three organisations closer together.

It has been a rather busy few months since I took over from Melanie on 1st January 2020, and I would like to thank the Committee for their hard work and support.

In January 2020 the Insurance Certificates went online in the Members area of the web site.

In March the Coronavirus Covid-19 pandemic struck. The extended morris community has been fantastically resourceful and innovative - holding online practices, hosting online events, creating videos and quizzes and supporting each other to keep our spirits up and giving us reasons to put our kit on and smile for the camera.

During this isolating time, we felt it was important to stay in contact with our member teams, so we increased the frequency of our broadcast emails and use of Facebook. We recently made all our Publications available as free downloads to members and started a short series of 'Isolation Instructional' videos. Plus our H&S Advisor Sally Wearing (another ex-President) helped us enormously with distilling the government guidance on Covid-19.

We have also been very sad to lose people we know and love in the morris world, and it really won't be the same without them when we next go out to dance.

In May and June the Black Lives Matter protests took hold worldwide following the death of George Floyd. As a Committee we felt that, although there is no racist intent in today's morris performers wearing full face black makeup, it was time to recognise that it is no longer acceptable in our world of today. Thus a motion to cease its use is being brought to our AGM for the membership to vote on. We also liaised closely with the Committees of The Morris Ring and Open Morris, who are of the same opinion and taking their own actions.

On to less contentious items. On our 'to do' list is to update the Member's Manual posted to new member teams, so as an interim step we have put it online in the Members Area of the web site.

We have also recently co-opted Sally Smith (Silkstone Greens and other teams) as Communications Officer who will take a lead on our external communications, i.e. with the public and press, and Daniel Watford (Wantsum Morris) who will take over from Mike Adamson as IT Administrator. Thank you to Mike Adamson for the massive amount of work he has done behind the scenes over the last 3 years, maintaining and enhancing the IT Infrastructure. Most importantly, Mike moved the IT infrastructure to a new server, migrated the membership records database to the new system mentioned above, and also made your Insurance Certificates available online.

Finally, a big "thank you" to Kinfauns Step Dancers for hosting the 2019 day of dance and AGM in Perth, Scotland, and we are looking forward to the postponed day of dance and AGM in 2021, to be hosted in Reading, Berkshire, by Customs and Exiles North West Morris.

Let's hope we can soon get back to dancing together.

Pauline Woods-Wilson
August 2020

(b) Secretary

The following teams have joined since we last met:

Belswagger Morris, Bootstrap Border, HARP, Madder Mill Molly, Westminster Morris and Whitstable Day Morris. We welcome them all.

The following sides have folded in the last year:

English Miscellany, Hawksword, Hi Jinx, Ickwell Green, Ionian Pearls, Kettle Bridge Clogs, Kirkburton Rapier Sword Dancers, Mad Hatter Morris, Oyster Morris, Polonez Dance, Rigel Junior Morris, Springstep, William Morris and Winter Solstice. We wish them all the very best.

I attended the EFDSS AGM in November at Cecil Sharp House in London, having not been able to attend the last year. The draft minutes are available on their website; Steve Roud, Alan Davey, & Ed Fishwick, and Ayub Khan & Laura Jones join the board.

In February I attended the Joint Morris Organisations' AGM in Nuneaton, hosted by The Morris Ring. The organisations co-operate to support best practice and communication between ourselves, Open Morris & The Morris Ring, as well as the specialist contribution of Michael Stimpson of Phoenix Morris, our insurance officer. You will see the Motion regarding prevention of money laundering – apparently even Morris dancers can be targeted!

The last event I attended before lockdown occurred was the Annual Representatives' Meeting, which is the Morris Ring's AGM, in Cannock. Pete Simpson's tenure as Squire, which is only ever two years, is ending this year and his successor is Simon Newman of Earlsdon Morris. He has already attended some JMO Zoom meetings in his capacity of Squire-elect.

I enjoyed working with Melanie Barber, former president, for six years as she led the Federation through some difficult times. Her successor, Pauline Woods-Wilson, is equally as informed, supportive, and incredibly hard-working. She has brought a surgical incisiveness to our discussions and keeps us from drifting too far into discussions about the best mixer for post-meeting cocktails!

Finally, on a personal note, you will have heard that John Bacon, our former president, died late last year. I was asked by his wife, Ann, to speak at his funeral in January, and the eulogy was published in *FedExtra*. He, Ann, Penny & Anthony John Allen and I started the Meltdown Ceilidhs in Haywards Heath in West Sussex in 2001. We ran the dances every year since then and John & Ann not only brought along the mighty Ditchling Morris, but never hesitated to offer to put up bands and callers in their lovely cottage. We heard about half an hour before the dance was due to start that John had died earlier that day following a routine operation. We particularly wanted to continue with the dance that night, but needed to inform our dancers and our friends of the news. Sheena Masson, the caller, very kindly let me make an announcement just before the very last dance, a circle dance to bring us all together, and we celebrated his life with a huge and heartfelt round of applause. I found him to be a wise and clever president; he was my friend, and I shall miss him.

Fee Lock
August 2020

(c) Treasurer

Treasurer Report to AGM 2020

Membership and renewals

Membership levels have dropped slightly this year.

To date (20/4/20) we have 515 members (529 in 2019):

- 493 group members
- 11 individuals
- 6 junior
- 5 overseas/associate

Some of the drop in numbers is due to teams who hadn't renewed membership before the start of the Coronavirus outbreak.

Sadly 14 teams have folded – English Miscellany, Hawksword, Hi Jinx, Ickwell Green, Ionian Pearls, Kettle Bridge Clogs, Kirkburton Rapier Sword Dancers, Mad Hatter Morris, Oyster Morris, Polonez Dance, Rigel Junior Morris, Springstep, William Morris and Winter Solstice.

We have 6 new teams, Belswagger Morris, Bootstrap Border, HARP, Madder Mill Molly, Westminster Morris and Whitstable Day Morris. Midwinter Mummers have rejoined after a lapse.

Our new membership system continues to make my job easier in the renewals season. This year we have provided the facility for teams to print off their own insurance documents at any stage during the year. This saved me a lot of time at renewals and, in the future, should also cut down on the last minute phone calls to replace lost documents before dance outs.

Sales and publications

Sales of bells and dance notation books remained steady. New stocks of bells were purchased, the manufacturers have now imposed a minimum order quantity as they have to buy in the metal especially. This has resulted in a larger stock of bells being held than in the past. Dance Notation books are now being uploaded to the website and will be available free of charge to members.

Banking

All accounts are at Lloyds bank, we have a current account, and an instant access savings account. Our fixed term deposit account has matured so I will search for another similar account with a reasonable interest rate.

Accounting period

Attached is a copy of the annual accounts for 2019/2020. Comparison with 2018/2019 accounts should be possible as the accounting periods are now in step.

Expenditure exceeded income by £6,653.31, this is largely due to the increased stock of bells purchased.

Points to note are that we sold about £6K more bells than last year, balanced by buying £10K more stock. Printing and posting costs were up about £1K – this includes AGM booklets and FedEx, plus bell postage. Last year's AGM (2019) incurred £2K more expense than 2018 as we paid travel and accommodation costs to the presidential candidates in addition to the committee, plus general running costs were more than the previous year.

In spite of these points, I propose that membership subscription rates for new members remain the same for the coming year.

COVID 19

During the COVID-19 pandemic no one has been able to dance out and there is little likelihood of any collections for sides. In view of the lack of income but the potential for some expenses, I propose that members applying for renewal for 2021 may do so at zero cost.

The likely cost of this action would be approx £18,400 loss of income (based on 2020 subscription rates). During the pandemic, I anticipate that our savings in expenditure to be in the region of £7,700 (based on the absence of physical committee meetings and AGM, fewer hard copy editions of the Newsletter etc). The Morris Federation will undertake to pay members' insurance and our insurance officer's fee for 2021.

Members are, of course, free to donate money (in lieu of subscription) to the Morris Federation if they wish.

Reserves

Reserves have been set at £27,000 rather than 100% of the operating expenses as these were inflated by the purchase of an abnormal number of bells.

Grants and Sponsorships

Grants and sponsorships have been made to:

- Malkin Morris for their maypole project
- Ripon Spur rapper for loan of rapper swords
- Morris Dance Database (project with Colin Andrews)
- Black Gate Morris for loan of equipment

No applications for grants were received for either the designated education fund or the designated fund for research into the history of women in morris.

Committee Expenses

A breakdown of the committee expenses for the period has been included. Should any member consider standing for a committee post, we have an expenses policy which pays for accommodation and travel costs incurred.

Other activities

Apart from attending the quarterly committee meetings, handling renewals and dealing with sales, this year I attended the JMO AGM. A relatively quiet year for meetings!

Accounts inspection

These accounts have been independently verified by Eddie Worrall, whom I should like to thank for all his help and advice.

Thank you for all your messages of support and thanks over the year

Jenny Everett
20th April 2020

Meeting to vote to accept the Treasurer's report and the subscription levels for 2021.

MORRIS FEDERATION ACCOUNTS 1/4/2019 to 16/4/2020

INCOME	2019/2020	2018/2019
GENERAL		
Subscriptions (including extra Newsletters)	£18,476.50	£18,882.50
Newsletter adverts	£0.00	£0.00
PRS contribution Morris Ring and Open Morris	£174.57	£0.00
Payment in error by team	£30.00	
TOTAL GENERAL	£18,681.07	£18,882.50
Mastering Performance Workshop		
ticket sales		£920.00
TOTAL MPW	£0.00	£920.00
DONATIONS & GRANTS		
CD sales and donations to designated education account	£0.00	£10.00
TOTAL DONATIONS & GRANTS	£0.00	£10.00
PROMOTIONS & PUBLICATIONS		
Sale of publications and PR goods (inc p&p)	£172.50	£132.50
TOTAL PR & PUBS	£172.50	£132.50
BELLS		
Sale of bells (inc p&p)	£12,099.12	£6,240.48
TOTAL BELLS	£12,099.12	£6,240.48
BANKING		
Interest on old Santander deposit account	£16.80	
Interest on savings account	£1.67	£2.11
Interest on Deposit Account	£325.47	£224.00
TOTAL BANKING	£343.94	£226.11
TOTAL INCOME	£31,296.63	£26,411.59

EXPENDITURE	2019/2020	2018/2019
GENERAL		
Subscription refunds	£175.00	£115.00
Printing and postage (newsletter, AGM notices)	£5,965.77	£4,625.90
Printing (inc. renewals)	£10.55	£0.00
Stationery & postage (inc postage of goods/bells)	£806.79	£438.38
Travel expenses	£1,505.00	£1,698.35
PRS charge (2 years)	£498.75	£0.00
EFDSS membership	£79.00	£76.00
AFO subs	£90.00	£90.00
Conference fees and accommodation	£541.50	£0.00
Committee meetings room hire	£160.00	£320.00
OM/Ring meetings accommodation	£0.00	£38.00
JMO meeting refreshments	£0.00	£34.15
Insurance	£4,379.86	£4,872.79
IT expenses	£785.33	£655.72
H&S premium	£213.00	£213.00
Archive acquisitions	£0.00	£0.00
Preparation of accounts	£13.35	£74.90
Payment in error by team	£30.00	
TOTAL GENERAL	£15,253.90	£13,252.19
Mastering Performance workshop		
TOTAL MPW	£0.00	£1,067.97
AGM and Day of Dance 2018		
AGM committee accommodation		£733.48
AGM badges		£55.20
TOTAL AGM and DAY of DANCE 2018	£0.00	£788.68
AGM and Day of Dance 2019		
AGM committee accommodation	£812.00	
AGM badges	£25.30	
AGM room hire	£735.00	
Candidate expenses	£1,070.25	
TOTAL AGM and DAY of DANCE 2019	£2,642.55	
AGM and Day of Dance 2020 (c/f to 2021)		
Band booking	£800.00	
AGM committee accommodation	£623.59	
TOTAL AGM and DofD 2020 (c/f to 2021)	£1,423.59	
JMO		
JMO day accommodation and admin	£0.00	£76.50
JMO host badges	£23.00	£0.00
TOTAL JMO	£23.00	£76.50
DONATIONS & GRANTS		
Lore and the Living Archive		£450.00
Morris Dance database project	£80.00	£80.00
Dancing England (MF teams travel expenses)		£1,308.35
Malkin Morris (maypole project)	£415.80	
Ripon Spur (new team equipment loan)	£272.00	
Black Gate Morris (new team equipment loan)	£775.00	
TOTAL DONATIONS & GRANTS	£1,542.80	£1,838.35
PROMOTIONS & PUBLICATIONS		
Publications printing	£19.75	
TOTAL PR & PUBS	£19.75	£0.00
BELLS		
Purchase of bells	£16,798.80	£6,060.96
Bell refunds	£245.55	£0.00
TOTAL BELLS	£17,044.35	£6,060.96
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£37,949.94	£23,084.65

COMMITTEE EXPENSES 1/4/2019 – 16/4/2020
PERSONAL EXPENSES

	travel	accom
Secretary	£490.00	
President	£525.35	£76.50
Notation officer	£127.95	
Treasurer	£60.00	£38.00
Archive officer	£434.30	
Newsletter editor	£26.10	
Co-opted IT support	£34.65	

ORGANISATIONAL EXPENSES

	stationery	postage	conf fees	IT	mtg rooms	AGM	JMO	accts pres
Secretary	£15.95	£38.96			£320.00	£55.20		
President			£121.82					
Treasurer		£378.37	£60.15			£348.00	£34.15	£74.90
Archive officer				£4.76				
Newsletter editor		£5.10						

Reserves			
	2019/2020	2018/2019	2017/2018
Unrestricted funds	£47,263.07	£53,914.22	£51,422.49
Designated funds: education account	£373.50	£373.50	£363.50
Designated funds: research account	£350	£350	£350
Total funds	£47,986.57	£53,637.72	£52,135.99
Ratio of reserves to annual operating expenditure	100%	100%	100%
Reserves	£27,000	£23,084.65	£23,937.22
Membership level	515	529	536

BANKING DETAILS

Banking 16/04/2020				
	general account	designated education account	designated research account	TOTAL
Current Account	£15,334.83	£373.50	£350.00	£16,058.33
Deposit Account				£0.00
Savings Account				£31,928.24
Total				£47,986.57

Banking 02/04/2019				
	general account	designated education account	designated research account	TOTAL
Current Account – Lloyds	£22,313.28	£373.50	£350.00	£23,036.78
Deposit Account				£28,224.00
Savings Account				£3,376.94
Total				£54,637.72

STOCK VALUES

	16/4/2020	1/4/2019
Stationery	£327.87	£336.70
Value of bells	£17,823.70	£10,997.80
Publications	£567.80	£583.60
Value of Promotions	£356.17	£443.14
Stock held sale or return by Morris Shop	£383.25	£383.25
Total	£19,458.79	£12,744.49

(d) Archive Officer

Most of the time, being the Archive Officer isn't particularly onerous: making or receiving a few acquisitions for the archive or library, the occasional query from a member or request to borrow items from the library.

Lockdown has both helped and hindered the work in that I have been able to start work on digitising the photograph archive to make it more accessible for members and to spend a bit more time on internet searches looking for relevant material, but I have been unable to meet face to face with a couple of volunteers to assess the future of the archive.

All The Morris Federation's publications have been scanned and are available free to members to download in pdf format from the website. They will still be available as print-to-order for purchase by non-members.

As a committee member it has been a much busier time than usual. Zoom meetings and emails have abounded as we have kept things running during the pandemic.

I am still happy to continue to act as The Morris Federation's archive officer and committee member but will be looking to 'retire' from the post at the end of the next three-year term. Early expressions of interest in taking over would be more than welcome.

Mike Everett

1 August 2020

(e) Notation Officer

Unsurprisingly, 2020 has been a quiet year for notation. There have been no requests for material not already available on the website and no progress has been made in integrating the notation "library" with the main website. New dance notation has been added to the collection for each of the jigs kindly offered up by members for the "Lockdown Instructional" series.

Jerry West

August 2020

(f) Newsletter Editor

What a strange year! News is always a bit thin over the winter months and so the winter issue was delayed and combined with the spring issue again this year, and its publication further delayed due to lockdown and uncertainty around our AGM. Covid-19 also halted play on further FedExtra editions this year, as with no dancing and no events, there has been very little going on to report back on.

There has been an increase in other forms of communication though, via 'Isolation Update' emails produced by Pauline as well as social media and website content produced by members of the committee, and this has led us to consider the mix of media we use to communicate with our members (and engage with the wider public), as well as the frequency of each. This is a developing area, but any feedback and suggestions are always welcome.

A lot of talk has arisen this year around various areas of diversity and I am keen to continue to encourage articles from all sections of our morris community, as well as challenge views that may be outdated or simply to provide an alternative point-of-view. If you feel a topic, team or tradition doesn't seem to get much coverage, then please send your submissions - illustrations, photos, poems, articles, research, etc. Guidelines for submissions are included in every issue of FedExtra.

I would like to thank everyone who has submitted articles this year, both pre- and post-isolation and look forward to the day when news of morris antics resume.

Sam Ross

August 2020