



# The Morris Federation

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September 2021

## AGM Pack 2021

To all members of The Morris Federation

These are the papers for the Annual General Meeting of The Morris Federation to be held on

**Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> September 2021 16:00**

**Online via Zoom**

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

## IMPORTANT NOTES

1. Each member team may register for one Zoom session to attend the meeting to represent the team (individual members have access in their own right). Each person may represent only 1 member team on 1 Zoom session for the duration of the meeting. Attendance at the Zoom meeting will be counted as 'represented in person' to determine whether the meeting is quorate (requires 15 group members to be represented). We are not planning to record the meeting.
2. Other members of your team (or a different member team) will be able to sit with the representative on the Zoom session, but will not be permitted to participate directly. There will also be a live stream on YouTube so that any member of any team may watch the meeting.
3. Questions about the AGM itself, how it will run, the live stream, etc, should be sent to [feedback@morrisfed.org.uk](mailto:feedback@morrisfed.org.uk). We will endeavour to answer all such questions as soon as practicable and no later than 48 hours before the AGM starts. There are no stupid questions - someone else almost certainly has the same query. We will use your questions as the basis for an AGM FAQ which we will make available to all members via our website [www.morrisfed.org.uk/agm](http://www.morrisfed.org.uk/agm)
4. Member contacts will be sent a separate document: **AGM Voting & Registration 2021** with details of how to register for the meeting, meeting etiquette, how to submit votes in advance, proxy votes, etc.
5. Members are encouraged to vote in advance. Details on how to do so will be included in the **AGM Voting & Registration 2021** document.
6. The 2 documents – the **AGM Pack 2021** and the **AGM Voting & Registration 2021** – will be sent to member contacts by broadcast email, and also made available on the Members area of the website (need to login) at [www.morrisfed.org.uk/members/agm](http://www.morrisfed.org.uk/members/agm)

## Voting

Member Teams have 10 votes to be apportioned to reflect the views of the side Full Individual Members and Honorary Life Members have 1 vote. [*Standing Order 10*]. See the Votes Conversion Table in the **AGM Voting & Registration** document on how to apportion votes to reflect the views of member teams.

Member Teams and Individual Members should vote 'in advance' by midnight on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> September if they are not planning to attend the online AGM. If you are the representative for your team and decide to attend after you have submitted your votes, you may do so and re-cast your votes at the meeting if you wish to change them.

**All members are encouraged to vote so that the views of the entire membership is known.**

Fee x  
Secretary  
The Morris Federation  
[www.morrisfed.org.uk](http://www.morrisfed.org.uk)

*The Morris Federation is a member of:*



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## THE MORRIS FEDERATION

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

#### AGENDA

This is a standard agenda for use at all Morris Federation Annual General Meetings. Please keep it safe, as another will not be circulated until a change becomes necessary.

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting
3. Matters arising
4. Annual Reports:
  - a) President
  - b) Secretary
  - c) Treasurer
  - d) Archive Officer
  - e) Notation Officer
  - f) Newsletter Editor
5. \* Motions
6. \* Discussions
7. \* Election of Committee
8. Date(s) of Future Annual General Meeting(s)
9. Any Other Business
10. Presentations and Votes of Thanks

\* Motions, discussion topics and nominations will be circulated separately to members, usually with each year's AGM notice

## **1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

These will be made available at the meeting.

## **2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The minutes of the previous meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2020 are available online at <https://www.morrisfed.org.uk/agm/>

Meeting to vote to accept the Minutes as a true and accurate record of the previous meeting.

The accuracy of the minutes is conventionally attested to by the President's signature on a printed copy of the minutes, made in the presence of the meeting. In the current circumstances, there will be no independent witness to that signature. One paper copy will be available to the President for any amendments/signing as an accurate record.

## **3 MATTERS ARISING**

All updates to the Constitution, Standing Orders and Resolutions have been made in accordance with Motions passed at the previous meeting. See: <https://www.morrisfed.org.uk/about/constitution/>

Motion 5 was referred back to the Committee, who decided that no further action be taken at this time.

As noted at our AGM in 2020, the Committee are of the view that our Constitution and Standing Orders need a thorough review and overhaul. The Committee propose that we look to replace these during 2022. If you are interested in joining a working party to bring forward proposals to an EGM/AGM, please contact Jerry West at [notation@morrisfed.org.uk](mailto:notation@morrisfed.org.uk)

## 4 ANNUAL REPORTS

### (a) President

Looking back at last year's reports, who would have thought that the world would still be in the grip of the Coronavirus Covid-19 pandemic one year later? Our thoughts go out to those who have lost friends and family during this time, and we will miss our morris friends when they are not at the next practice or dance out.

Thanks go to Sally Wearing, our Health & Safety Advisor, who continued to read all the relevant government guidance on Covid-19 at each new release, and then provided helpful advice and updated Risk Assessment templates at each new restriction level.

Over the last year, we continued to issue frequent broadcast emails to keep everyone in touch with any morris and related activities happening online, and hope this was useful to you and a bit of fun.

We then started a series of our own online events 'live' over Zoom to give us something to look forward to during lockdown in the dark days of winter. These events quickly picked up momentum and ran between November and May, gaining an international audience! Many thanks go to everyone who contributed by teaching a workshop, giving a talk, hosting, editing videos, doing a write-up for the web site, and of course to everyone for being there in the audience and donating to charity. It's difficult to select a highlight, but one of the moments that touched me was seeing over 100 people bobbing up and down to music, together. Or together-apart-together, so to speak.

Quite a few festivals had an online element, and teams submitted serious and funny videos for our online viewing pleasure.

The Committee has made a fair start in updating the Member's Manual (in the Members are of the web site) which has a wealth of advice, mostly for new teams. It still needs further work and if you can contribute your advice or specialist knowledge to any sections, then do please let us know.

Again, massive thanks to the Committee for all their hard work and support, and to our co-opted committee: Daniel Watford (Wantsum Morris) our IT Administrator; Brian Kelly (Wylde Morris, ex Newcastle Kingsmen) our Communications and IT Officer with a special interest in archiving of digital resources; and Sally Smith (Silkstone Greens and other teams) our Communications Officer. You will find their reports elsewhere in this section. Thanks are also due to James Merryclough (Five Rivers) for liaison with the Press; Brian Crow (Cardiff) for video editing; Rachel Cole-Wilkin (Belles of London City) for advice on teaching young people; Alan Courtney (Sarum) for photographs; and Roger Kennington for chairing part of the last AGM.

We ought to note that the ban on the use of full face black makeup passed at our last AGM was followed similarly by both the Open Morris and The Morris Ring at their annual meetings.

We are sorry we had to cancel the MF day of dance in 2021 which was to be hosted in Reading by Customs and Exiles North West Morris. Now we are looking forward to our two national in-person events in 2022 – the twice postponed JMO day of dance on Saturday 9th April in Liverpool hosted by the Morris Ring, and the MF day of dance and AGM on Saturday 24th September hosted in Darlington, County Durham, by Black Diamond Mixed Cotswold Morris. Hope to see you there!

Looking ahead to the next year, recruitment and retention will be hot topics for most teams, so please let us know how we can support you. I would also like to start working on what members told me were important when I was elected – teaching morris and related activities in schools; and improving the image of morris in the media. Again, if you would like to be involved, do please contact me.

Pauline Woods-Wilson  
August 2021

## Online events 'live' on Zoom in 2020-2021

Nov	Hastings Jack in the Green - Talk	Keith Leech, Fee Lock
Nov	Clogmaking - Demo	Simon Brock
Nov-Dec	Cotswold for beginners - 3 Workshops	Andrew Knight, Lin Steel, Tony Warren (KOKI)
Dec	Making rapper swords - Demo	Frank Lee
Dec	How to love tunes you hate! - Workshop	Will Allen
Jan	Clog Stepping for Beginners - 2 Workshops	Georgia Shorrocks, Hadrian Clog
Jan	Online Practices and Zoom Q&A - Chat	Pauline Woods-Wilson
Jan	North West - The Nelson Dance - Workshop	Virginia Crewe (Malkin Morris)
Jan	Goathland Plough Stots - Talk	Keith Thompson, Sally Smith
Jan	Making a Beast - Demo	Geoff Roberts
Jan	Cotswold Bucknell - Workshop	KOKI as above
Jan	Morris from the Archives - Talk	Jameson Wooders
Jan	North West 'Lockdown' dance - Workshop	Hazel Old & Will Pound (Chinewrde)
Feb	Virtual Ceilidh Calling Masterclass	Fee Lock & Martyn Harvey
Feb	Shrewsbury Septimus puppet - Talk	Bev & Ray Langton
Feb	Appalachian Clog - Beginners & Intermediate - 2 Workshops each	Abby Ladin & Sam Bartlett
Feb	Shrewsbury on twitter - Talk	Graydon Radford, Ray Langton
Feb	Cotswold Bledington - Workshop	KOKI as above
Mar	Morris Music a History Taborers Soc - Talk	Stephen Rowley, Andy Richards
Mar	Clog Stepping - Intermediate - 2 Workshops	Melanie Barber & Mike Adamson
Mar	Sussex Bonfires - Talk	Keith & Heather Leech
Mar	Clogs in Britain and Beyond - Talk	Michael L Jackson
Mar	Fiddle playing for Morris - Workshop	Sarah Matthews
Mar	JMO Morris Census - Talk	Jack Worth
Mar	Pipe & Tabor for beginners - Workshop	Andy Richards
Mar-Apr-	Return to Dancing Fitness - 2 Workshops	Rhys Boorman
May	and 5 Videos	
Mar	Kirtlington Morris & Lamb Ale - Talk/Workshop	John Mayo, John Leslie, Bob Dunlop, Paul Davenport, Tim Radford, Nigel Holt, Dillon Browne
Mar	Cotswold Ilmington 2 jigs - Workshop	KOKI as above
Apr	Family Dance - Workshop	Rachel Cole-Wilkin
Apr	Morris revival 1856-1951 - Talk	Matt Simons
Apr	Border solo dance 'Vaccine' - Workshop	Linda & Jay Glanville, Pauline Woods-Wilson
Apr	Good Morning, Lords and Ladies - Talk	Barry & Gill Goodman
Apr	JMO - Music Session	Sarah & Tom Sennett, Emma & Jon Melville, Sel Adamu & Ben Potton, Sarah Matthews & Doug Eunson
Apr	JMO - Bacca Pipes	Rachel Cole-Wilkin
Apr	JMO - North West 'Celebration' - Workshop	John Earnshaw
Apr	JMO - Mrs Marhoff's Clog Routine - Workshop	Toby Bennett
Apr	JMO - Cotswold Oddington - Workshop	Ollie and Matt Simons
Apr	JMO - Massed Dancing	Various
Apr	Adderbury Morris Men - Talk	Keith Norton, Stephen & Verna Wass, Tim Radford, Chris Leslie, Dave Moore, David Gunby
May	Who were the Sword Dancers? - Talk	Andrew Kennedy
May	Morris Dancers and Rose Queens Vol 1 - Talk	Johnny Haslett

**(b) Secretary**

I normally don't have anything much to report to the membership at the AGM as it's normally been said by the president, on behalf of the committee, or the other officers who do more exciting things than I do. Generally I attend meetings with the other Morris organisations (reported by the president) or other groups (my report is usually sent to the newsletter). This year, with so little having happened, I don't have a great deal to report on independently, other than to mention a couple of things during my tenure that I think are worth recalling:

Steve Heap of the Association of Festival Organisers highlighted a change in legislation that was due in 2003, which would result in Morris dancers needing to apply for a Temporary Event Notice when dancing with more than two performers. This was very cleverly avoided by the late John Bacon during his presidency, in achieving an exemption from the Licensing Act 2003 (now superseded) courtesy of Lord Redesdale and led to the nascent Joint Morris Organisations forming a regular day of dance. It's hard to believe now how little we talked to each other!

It's not possible to reflect on the last few years without mentioning the sea change in attitudes towards face paint, especially the use of full-face black make-up. For the committee in general and for me in particular, it's been six or more years in the making since Fairness, Respect & Equality in Shropshire (FRESH) laid out their claim that in booking Morris Federation sides at a national festival contravened the Equality Act 2010 and could lead to civil or criminal proceedings. Following meetings had by Melanie Barber, the president at the time, this initially led to the guidelines we issued in 2017, suggesting that sides give serious consideration to whether the use of black face paint would be appropriate in each instance, given that we could not legally promise any kind of protection against action as a result of offence taken. That was an extremely difficult time for us all and I was heartened by how seriously our members took the issue.

Naturally, this leads on to the events of last summer, writ large on all our screens as we had no dancing or practising to divert us as the world changed its views on many things, black-face make-up included. As a committee we felt we had an obligation to face this head-on, and as evidenced by the record four and a half-hour long AGM – an absolute record in my time – an issue which we all needed to discuss. I am deeply grateful to the hard work of all of my colleagues, and all members of the Federation (as well as those others who helped behind the scenes) to bring about the changes in the constitution and the subsequent changes in sides' face paint decisions. I hope that those who felt differently and moved on have been able to continue with the amazing hobby – sport – practice – life-affirming essential practice – of Morris dancing.

I've had the immense honour of working with some utterly fabulous people on this committee: to name one would leave the others out; the alternative being a roll-call of some of my favourite people (!). Suffice to say that it's been a brilliant twenty-one years; with the three-year tenure for this post being due now it's sensible for a new person to come along and make it their own. I'm pleased that we've been able to recruit some rather wonderful co-optees: I tend to think of myself as being a bit of a Jill-of-all-trades but it's clear that Sally, Dan, & Brian's expertise far exceeds any of my amateurish tinkering with websites, directories, or press/PR. Pauline is an exceptional person whose attention to detail, persistence, and all-round determination to Make Things Happen made me exceedingly pleased she chose to stand as president, and I don't think we would have been able to provide such a varied – and indeed vast – range of workshops during the year of Covid-19.

As I feel extremely strongly that we should continue pursuing good relations through collaboration and co-operation, with their permission of the committee I'm remaining the Secretary of the Joint Morris Organisations' and a co-opted member of the Federation committee. So I still will see some of you and Morris occasions, and undoubtedly at festivals and ceilidhs. Thank you all for your help and support and friendship over the years, and I wish my successor all the very best.

Fee Lock  
Hastings, August 2021



## Treasurer Report to AGM 2021

### Membership and renewals

Membership levels have dropped slightly this year.  
To date (16/4/21) we have 507 members (515 in 2019):  
478 group members  
13 individuals  
7 junior  
9 overseas/associate

Sadly 1 team has folded – Cononley Morris.

We have 4 new teams, The Britannia Morris, Jigs O'Marlowe, Liberty Hill Northwest Morris, Young Miscellany and 2 new individual members.

The renewals season was easier this year, with no subscriptions needing to be banked, but I had to field a large number of queries.

### Sales and publications

Sales of bells were low as everyone had hung up their bellpads for the pandemic. Dance Notation books are now available free of charge to members to download from the website.

### Banking

All accounts are at Lloyds bank, we have a current account, and an instant access savings account. Due to the pandemic and the uncertainty of having no income this year, I have not yet re-opened a deposit account.

### Accounting period

Attached is a copy of the annual accounts for 2020/2021. Comparison with 2019/2020 accounts should be possible as the accounting periods are in step.

Expenditure exceeded income by £4,677.49 due to the lack of income and the reduction in committee expenses due to lack of travel allowed.

I propose that membership subscription rates remain at pre-covid levels for the coming year.

My thanks go to members who chose to donate money in lieu of subscriptions.

### Reserves

Reserves have remained set at £27,000 as this has not been a typical year.

### Grants and Sponsorships

No applications for grants or sponsorships were received.

### 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

In common with a lot of our members, I am sure, I have spent a lot of the year on Zoom. Committee meetings were held more frequently than usual, together with more frequent Joint Morris Organisations meetings. I also co-hosted many of Pauline's winter lockdown series of zooms. It has been great to see so many members taking advantage of these sessions.

### 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

<b>MORRIS FEDERATION ACCOUNTS</b>		
<b>16/4/2020 to 6/4/2021</b>		
<b>INCOME</b>	<b>2020/2021</b>	<b>2019/2020</b>
<b>GENERAL</b>		
Subscriptions (including extra Newsletters)	£316.71	£18,476.50
Newsletter adverts	£0.00	£0.00
PRS contribution Morris Ring and Open Morris	£0.00	£174.57
Payment in error by team		£30.00
Donations	£220.01	
<b>TOTAL GENERAL</b>	<b>£536.72</b>	<b>£18,681.07</b>
<b>AGM 2020</b>		
Band refund	£800.00	
Accommodation refund	£658.25	
<b>TOTAL AGM 2020</b>	<b>£1,458.25</b>	
<b>DONATIONS &amp; GRANTS</b>		
CD sales and donations to designated education account	£0.00	£0.00
<b>TOTAL DONATIONS &amp; GRANTS</b>	<b>£0.00</b>	<b>£0.00</b>
<b>PROMOTIONS &amp; PUBLICATIONS</b>		
Sale of publications and PR goods (inc p&p)	£22.60	£172.50
<b>TOTAL PR &amp; PUBS</b>	<b>£22.60</b>	<b>£172.50</b>
<b>BELLS</b>		
Sale of bells (inc p&p)	£585.66	£12,099.12
<b>TOTAL BELLS</b>	<b>£585.66</b>	<b>£12,099.12</b>
<b>BANKING</b>		
Interest on old Santander deposit account		£16.80
Interest on savings account	£6.81	£1.67
Interest on Deposit Account		£325.47
<b>TOTAL BANKING</b>	<b>£6.81</b>	<b>£343.94</b>
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>£2,610.04</b>	<b>£31,296.63</b>

<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>2020/2021</b>	<b>2019/2020</b>
<b>GENERAL</b>		
Subscription refunds	£105.00	£175.00
Printing and postage (newsletter, AGM notices)	£0.00	£5,965.77
Printing (inc. renewals)	£5.25	£10.55
Stationery & postage (inc postage of goods/bells)	£354.02	£806.79
Travel expenses	£226.30	£1,505.00
PRS charge (2 years)	£0.00	£498.75
EFDSS membership	£81.00	£79.00
AFO subs	£90.00	£90.00
Conference fees and accommodation	£0.00	£541.50
Committee meetings room hire	£80.00	£160.00
Insurance	£4,340.82	£4,379.86
IT expenses	£1,389.55	£785.33
H&S premium & thank you	£252.95	£213.00
Archive acquisitions	£73.12	£0.00
AGM Reference books	£31.89	
Preparation of accounts		£13.35
Payment in error by team		£30.00
<b>TOTAL GENERAL</b>	<b>£7,029.90</b>	<b>£15,253.90</b>
<b>AGM and Day of Dance 2019</b>		
AGM committee accommodation		£812.00
AGM badges		£25.30
AGM room hire		£735.00
Candidate expenses		£1,070.25
<b>TOTAL AGM and DAY of DANCE 2019</b>	<b>£0.00</b>	<b>£2,642.55</b>
<b>AGM 2020</b>		
Band booking		£800.00
Zoom charges	£222.97	
AGM committee accommodation	£34.66	£623.59
<b>TOTAL AGM and DAY of DANCE 2020</b>	<b>£257.63</b>	<b>£1,423.59</b>
<b>JMO</b>		
JMO host badges	£0.00	£23.00
<b>TOTAL JMO</b>	<b>£0.00</b>	<b>£23.00</b>
<b>DONATIONS &amp; GRANTS</b>		
Morris Dance database project		£80.00
Malkin Morris (maypole project)		£415.80
Ripon Spur (new team equipment loan)		£272.00
Black Gate Morris (new team equipment loan)		£775.00
<b>TOTAL DONATIONS &amp; GRANTS</b>	<b>£0.00</b>	<b>£1,542.80</b>
<b>PROMOTIONS &amp; PUBLICATIONS</b>		
Publications printing	£0.00	£19.75
<b>TOTAL PR &amp; PUBS</b>	<b>£0.00</b>	<b>£19.75</b>
<b>BELLS</b>		
Purchase of bells		£16,798.80
Bell refunds	£0.00	£245.55
<b>TOTAL BELLS</b>	<b>£0.00</b>	<b>£17,044.35</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>£7,287.53</b>	<b>£37,949.94</b>

**COMMITTEE EXPENSES 1/4/20 – 16/4/21**

**Personal Expenses**

travel

Secretary	
President	£226.30
Notation officer	
Treasurer	
Archive officer	
Newsletter editor	
Co-opted IT support	

**Organisational expenses**

	stationery	archive acquisition	IT	mtg room	AGM 2020	H&S thank you
Secretary			£191.98	£80	£222.97	
President					£31.89	£39.95
Treasurer		£3.50		£348.00	£34.66	
Archive officer		£2.80				
Newsletter editor						

<b>Reserves</b>			
	<b>2020/2021</b>	<b>2019/2020</b>	<b>2018/2019</b>
Unrestricted funds	£42618.48	£47,263.07	£53,914.22
Designated funds: education account	£373.50	£373.50	£373.50
Designated funds: research account	£350	£350	£350
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>£43,341.98</b>	<b>£47,986.57</b>	<b>£53,637.72</b>
Ratio of reserves to annual operating expenditure	100%	100%	100%
Reserves	27,000	£27,000	£23,084.65
Membership level	507	515	529

## BANKING DETAILS

<b>Banking 6/04/2021</b>				
	general account	designated education account	designated research account	TOTAL
Current Account	£10,683.53	£373.50	£350.00	£11,407.03
Savings Account				£31,934.95
<b>Total</b>				<b>£43,341.98</b>

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

## STOCK VALUES

	<b>16/4/21</b>	<b>16/4/20</b>
Stationery	£299.58	£327.87
Value of bells	£17,325.70	£17,823.70
Publications	£543.90	£567.80
Value of Promotions	£330.55	£356.17
Stock held sale or return by Morris Shop	£383.25	£383.25
<b>Total</b>	<b>£18,882.98</b>	<b>£19,458.79</b>

**(d) Archive Officer**

My thanks go to the membership for your support and re-electing me at last year's AGM to look after your archive for another three years.

Lockdown has provided challenges and opportunities as well as frustration. Committee meetings have been held over Zoom, saving expense and travel time. The President organised lots of activities for the membership and beyond, all held on Zoom and which I was privileged to help with a few.

Digitisation of The Morris Federation's photographic archive has begun and, with the help of a couple of volunteers - Sally Bird and Matt Simons, it is being catalogued and tagged. Currently, this is stored on Microsoft Teams with a longer-term view of linking the archive to the website and making it more easily accessible to members.

While undertaking a review of The Morris Federation library, multiple copies of some items have been found. These will probably be made available and advertised via our Facebook page during the autumn and winter.

I have also been part of a small group with Melanie Barber, former President, and the Treasurer, Jenny Everett, that has started work on producing a book for The Morris Federation's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary and covering its history in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Other ideas for this anniversary are being considered such as regional days of dance celebrations. Would there be enough interest for another CD compilation?

Remember The Morris Federation is its members so if you have ideas or would like to offer help in any areas, we'd love to hear from you.

Mike Everett  
August 2021

**(e) Notation Officer**

Although this has been the most difficult of years, we have actually increased the amount of material now available both for posterity and to the interested public through the series of "Lockdown Instructionals" and related talks so ably organised by our President, Pauline Woods-Wilson.

In particular, Pauline's insistence that the talks and workshops be recorded and made available on YouTube have ensured that these have been enjoyed not only by the original audience but by (a small, but select, number of) viewers world-wide! Whilst not large numbers by YouTube standards, to see hundreds of people revisit these talks is most gratifying.

There has, unsurprisingly, been very little other activity this year. Teams have had more to worry about than dance notation! My thanks to Albion Fair, and to Malkin Morris, to Barbara Butler, and to all those who provided notation or material for the Lockdown talks (and who are credited elsewhere).

We still welcome dance notation - preferably accompanied by videos and/or mp4 music files - from all teams, either for archive or for publication.

On a final, more sombre note, although it is upsetting to think about, may I ask teams that find themselves unable to restart, for whatever reason, to consider taking the effort to notate or record their dances and offer them to us to archive. It would be nice to think that future generations could look back on what you did and seek inspiration for their own performances.

Finally, on an unrelated topic, I have volunteered to coordinate an effort to update the Federation constitution and wish to construct a working party to put suggestions forward at a future AGM or EGM. If you have relevant expertise, or simply more than average interest(!), and would like to contribute, I would very much like to hear from you.

Jerry West  
July 2021

## **(f) Newsletter Editor**

Covid-19 continued to limit FedExtra this year. An entire year with no events, meant that any submissions were kept for a bumper digital edition to be released later this year, reporting on all the things teams did manage to get up to on Zoom and occasionally in person.

One team stood alone in 'flying the flag for morris' for most of 2020 and that was Belles and Broomsticks on Guernsey, who were dancing admirably from July onwards until their second lockdown halted play from January to March. Thanks to John Gillson for the (almost) monthly updates!

Other forms of communication have been keeping our membership up to date though, with the continuation of 'Isolation Update' emails, social media, and website content. With a couple more co-opted committee members, our combined communications should enable us to reach many more members than a printed newsletter can achieve alone, but rest assured that the newsletter will return to both its printed and digital formats and a more regular output as activity in the morris community increases.

As always, please send your submissions - illustrations, photos, poems, articles, research, etc. to [newsletter@morrisfed.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@morrisfed.org.uk). Guidelines for submissions are included in every issue of FedExtra.

I would like to thank everyone who has submitted articles this year, despite the uncertainty and frustration and I look forward to a better year of dancing to come.

Sam Ross  
July 2021

**Further reports have been submitted by our co-opted members, advisors and others representing us on projects:**

## **(g) IT Administrator**

Throughout the last year we have made progress on:

- Simplifying the MF IT infrastructure with a view to reduce the skillset and time required for its administration.
- Improving the rank of the MF in search engine results for queries related to morris dancing.

### **Website Hosting**

The Morris Federation website was hosted on our own private server. Having our own server offered significant flexibility in what we could do with our website, but at a cost of complexity.

The MF was not really benefiting from the flexibility of having our own server and our needs could be met by many hosting companies. To reduce the maintenance effort of running our own server, we moved the website to hosting company, Krystal, in January.

The move has saved an average of 15 minutes of checks and updates per week and around £35 of costs related to operating the website per year. We were also able to cancel a planned server operating system upgrade, saving hours of work.

### **Website Theme Builder**

The Morris Federation website is built on software called WordPress, the look of which is controlled by a theme coded in the PHP programming language. To simplify changing and maintaining the theme, we have switched to a visual page builder tool called Elementor which should reduce the need for programming.

This simplification in altering the look of the MF website has allowed us to resolve some long-standing usability issues more easily when viewed on smaller screen, such as mobile phones, where the menu would cover the content being read. Contributing to the website should now be easier for less technical authors. Any budding web designers out there, please get in touch!

### **Document Management**

The MF has had the benefit of a free Google Workspace subscription for file storage and tools for creating documents, spreadsheets, etc, but we were reaching the storage limits of the free offering.

After reviewing the products available from Google and Microsoft it was decided that the federation would move to Microsoft 365. Microsoft 365 includes online file storage (OneDrive, SharePoint), web-browser versions of Microsoft Office tools (Word, Excel, PowerPoint) and Microsoft Teams.

Use of Microsoft 365 allows guest users to access parts of our document storage area. This facility has already been used within the MF Archive storage area where invited guest users help to organise archive content.

### **Search Engine Optimisation**

There is no way of magically improving rankings in search results. Instead, we need to ensure the site does well in a few key areas:

- Performance: The site must provide timely response to page requests and pages should load in the web browser as quickly as possible.
- Screen size responsiveness: The site must work well on the small screens of mobile devices as well as the large screens of desktop computers.
- Relevant and frequently updated content.
- Meaningful links between pages and from external sites.

Hosting the website with Krystal has delivered a performance boost. Their servers use caching which tends to render web pages faster. They also provide functionality to optimise image sizes, reducing the amount of data needed to be downloaded when displaying a page.

Screen size responsiveness has been improved by switching to the Elementor page builder, along with a few other fixes. Having a website that renders well on mobile devices is expected to give a boost to search rankings.

The quantity of relevant content has increased over lockdown thanks to the various events hosted by the MF.

We still have a long way to go, but we are starting to see improvements.

### **MailChimp Synchronisation**

The MF uses MailChimp to handle bulk email delivery for the Broadcast messages.

For some time, we had trouble automatically updating contact details in the MailChimp audience following changes entered into the membership database, MembershipWorks.

This issue has now been resolved by recognising that the MF has two different audiences for its bulk emails:

- Contacts for members who need to receive information regarding MF business – e.g., AGM notices.
- Individual persons who wish to receive news and event notifications from the MF.

Creating two audiences meant we needed to move to a paid subscription from MailChimp, but meant we can properly clear out and resynchronise the members-contacts audience without impacting the individual-persons audience. The result is that members-contacts are now correct in emails sent to them by the MF.

Daniel Watford – [morrisfedit@gmail.com](mailto:morrisfedit@gmail.com)  
September 2021



## **(h) Communications & IT Officer**

Brian Kelly, dancer with Haymarket Rapper and Wyld Morris and previously Betty with Newcastle Kingsmen and others, became the Communications and IT volunteer in January 2021.

His main areas of work have been (1) improving quality of links to teams' digital profiles; (2) gaining an understanding of teams' use of digital technologies in order to (3) minimise risks of loss of resources; (4) identify IT governance issues; (5) identify how online services can be used effectively; (6) explore ways of enhancing use of IT for team marketing and communications including (7) providing documentation on effective use of IT.

### **1. Improve quality of links to teams' digital profiles**

Significant numbers of links to team websites, Facebook profiles, YouTube channels, etc were not working. Teams were contacted and changes suggested. As of 1 September 2021 about 95% of the links now work.

### **2. Gain an understanding of teams' use of digital technologies**

The analysis provided the following information: (a) 70% of sides have a website and 73% have a Facebook presence; (b) 21 sides have a dedicated YouTube channel, with four using a personalised URL (e.g. [www.youtube.com/c/hookeaglemorris/](http://www.youtube.com/c/hookeaglemorris/)); (c) 24 sides have a dedicated Instagram account; (d) 46 sides have a dedicated Twitter account and (e) 51 sites have not listed a website or Facebook account.

This evidence helps identify areas in which improvements can be made, including minimising risks of loss of data.

### **3. Digital preservation: minimising risks of loss of resources**

Sides have folded recently for a variety of reasons, and there are dangers that their side's history may be lost. We have documented use of the [Internet Archive's WayBack Machine](#) for retrieval of old versions of websites (including websites which may no longer exist) and use of the British Library's UK Web Archive.

### **4. IT governance**

Websites can be lost for a number of technical reasons (e.g. security issues) but non-technical reasons may also be a factor (e.g. loss of an email account which is used to receive notifications of website renewal dates). IT governance issues are particularly relevant for morris sides as roles can change after AGMs; people may leave the side; fall ill; etc. A document on "[Governance of Online Systems](#)" has been published.

### **5. Using digital technologies for recruitment, marketing and outreach activities**

Many sides will be looking to recruit new members, or market themselves. Online service can play an important role in supporting such activities. A number of documents are available covering topics such as setting up and managing a Google Business Profile (so your side is easily found for a "[morris side near me](#)" Google search).

Not all sides will have the IT skills, time or interest in maintaining a website or Facebook profile. We have therefore developed the Teamfinder service to allow side to add images, videos & descriptions to their profile ([see example](#)).

### **6. Explore ways of enhancing use of digital technologies**

We are keen on facilitating sharing of best IT practices across the community. We are planning an initial Zoom meeting which will provide an opportunity to receive suggestions on topics and level of interest in further Zoom meetings. We encourage those who have IT stories to share to contribute to a case studies section on the website.

### **7. IT advice and support**

An [IT Advice and Support](#) area of the Morris Federation website has been published (see <https://www.morrisfed.org.uk/resources/IT/>). This provides three main areas (1) **Advisory documents**; (2) **Surveys** and (3) **Case studies**.

### **Get in touch**

If you'd like further information, please email [comms-it@morrisfed.org.uk](mailto:comms-it@morrisfed.org.uk)

Brian Kelly  
September 2021

## **(j) Communications Officer**

I was co-opted onto the committee to assist in communications especially with the media and the wider world. I personally felt that there was a lot that could be done to improve the public image of the morris in the media and wider world. I know this is not a simple fix having been involved in a Morris Federation think tank in the 90s on the very same subject!

### **Initial thoughts on Morris in the Media include the objective:**

*The objective is for the media in England to portray traditional and evolving morris / sword / clog / traditional dance in a positive light. For the Morris Federation to be a place of information and resources where members of the public, enthusiasts, media, journalists etc. can get correct, up-to-date information and advice.*

### **Things achieved this year:**

- Engagements with the wider world:
  - The Morris Movie
  - Shakespeare Birthplace Trust
  - Print Publications and Journalists
  - Little Amal, giant puppet project
  - Documentary film makers development
- Editing for the Morris Winter/Spring Workshop videos
- Improving membership of social media platforms/groups/pages
  - Brian Kelly came on board to take over the social media side of things.
- Ideas for the future including
  - Memes (initial work done thanks to Abigail Banfield)
  - Awards (see discussion point)
  - Schools work – there is a lot we can do here including workshops, teaching resources, UK-wide projects and bringing schools together at events/festivals. Time and resources are barriers for this happening immediately.
  - Quality resources for the wider world with introduction to morris and its different traditions.

As with all voluntary organisations, the issue with lots of these great ideas is time and resources (usually costs).

I have created a 4-element marketing plan including the following:

- Information packs
- Improving Equality and Diversity
- Positive Profile Raising
- Spreading the word/New Generations

However, these elements rely heavily on volunteer time.

We definitely need to get some quality video resources in place for those people (children, journalists or general public) that want to find out more and this in turn, affects how the Morris Federation and morris dancing is seen outside the morris world. Many I have seen in places (including BBC Bitesize resources) are cobbled together, often inaccurate and very out of date. Making good quality offerings, as many other things, cost time and money to do.

Sally Smith  
August 2021

## **(k) Health & Safety Advisor**

The last year has been extremely busy. The list below provides a rough overview of my activity as H&S Advisor for The Morris Federation:

- writing at least 11 updates for MF's website, covering general issues, practices and performances
- reviewing the government guidance for England repeatedly (i.e. every time it was updated and when I was asked a specific question by a team), for Scotland (twice) and Wales (three times)
- answering about 120 enquiries from teams
- creating and regularly revising template risk assessments for practices and performances, with supporting notes on how to use them
- participating in online meetings, advising MF and JMO officers, reviewing letters to the DCMS, etc.

I am glad to say that, since 19th July, my workload has reduced considerably!

Sally Wearing  
September 2021

## **(k) Projects**

### **25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Book (years 1975 to 2000)**

We have continued to work on the text for the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary book. It is now almost all written. The next stages will be to edit it and choose the illustrations.

Sally Wearing, September 2021

### **50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Book (years 2000 to 2025)**

The Morris Federation's 25-50 years book is starting to take shape. Obviously we haven't reached 50 as yet, but we have been researching and gathering information from 25 years on, which will eventually be available as a hard copy souvenir book with supporting online resources.

Melanie Barber, September 2021

### **SCHEGAR (Safeguarding our Cultural Heritage of Dance through Augmented Reality)**

This is a joint project, lead by the University of Cyprus with partner universities in France and Warwick. The Morris Federation's support provides expert input on traditional Morris dancing and access to our archive. The ultimate outcome will be the ability to experience different styles of traditional dance virtually. After being delayed by the pandemic, the SCHEGAR project finally filmed their first trial at the end of June with myself and Linda Pound from Chinewrde Morris, and Mike Adamson providing the music. They went on to film 4 members of Chinewrde dancing 'Lockdown', written by Hazel Old at the end of July. This is shaping up to be a really interesting project, something that would have been fantastic to have had pre-pandemic to keep us all virtually dancing!

Melanie Barber, September 2021

### **Morris Dances and Teams Database (MDDB)**

The MF contributes towards the running costs of this independent database. All sides are invited to contribute, see: [www.morrisdancedatabase.org.uk](http://www.morrisdancedatabase.org.uk). In the past year, most sides now have a photograph and at least some of their dance repertoire shown on the database, and many now also have someone registered as a team editor for the side. There is now a facility for a side to include video links, and to show variations to existing dances. A new feature is a record of Cotswold sides known or believed to exist before 1900; a similar record for other forms of morris is planned. Some progress has been made in establishing the provenance of new dances that have been listed as of 'unspecified' tradition or origin but further help from the Morris fraternity would be much appreciated. Also, information from former members about any side that is no longer in existence would be welcome.

Colin Andrews, September 2021

## 5 MOTIONS

None notified.

## 6 DISCUSSIONS

Discussions do not form part of any voting process as such, however, they may form part of a Motion for future general meetings.

### DISCUSSION 1 - MF AWARDS

#### Morris Federation Award Categories

Jenny Everett (Treasurer) and Sally Smith (Communications)

It is suggested that the membership consider awards, in addition to the existing Honorary Life Membership (can be proposed by the membership and voted on appropriately) and Friend of the Morris Federation, the latter usually conferred by agreement of the Committee.

#### The Morris Federation Awards – proposed categories

##### **Friend of the Morris Federation**

Awarded to a person, not necessarily a member of the morris, who has assisted the Morris Federation in pursuit of its aims, in an exceptional way.

##### **Honorary Life membership of the Morris Federation**

Awarded to a person who has assisted the Morris Federation in pursuit of its aims, in an exceptional way. Includes free membership for life.

##### **John Bacon Award**

Awarded to an individual or team member for promotion of morris in a child or youth setting.

##### **Public Profile Award**

Awarded to an individual or team member for promoting morris in the press or raising the profile of morris in the public eye.

##### **Service Award**

Awarded to an individual or team member for providing a service to other Morris Federation members.

#### General points

Award to be presented at the AGM.

More than one award (or none) may be presented each year.

May be awarded to one person or a team.

Proposed and seconded by teams. Proposer to provide written rationale. Proposer to be available to be interviewed by the committee to enable them to make an informed decision.

Award to be celebratory badge (Butterworth), certificate, piece in the FedExtra newsletter.

## **DISCUSSION 2 - RECRUITMENT & DIVERSITY**

Mike Everett (Archive Officer)

This is an opportunity to discuss, ask questions, share good (and bad) practice and make suggestions around the areas of recruitment and diversity in morris and related activities. Here are some questions to start off with, feel free to add to them.

### **RECRUITMENT**

We know that recruitment is an important issue for many morris sides. It would be good to share case studies from teams of recruitment initiatives that have been successful, and also get suggestions as to how the MF could best support member teams.

We know, anecdotally, that people broadly join groups that reflect those whom they see in the mirror, so Morris sides that are predominantly peopled by the over 50s are less likely to recruit people under 30. Those of us who do voluntary work outside of the morris know that there is a vanishingly small number of people under 30 or so volunteering, or in fact taking part in outdoor/free hobbies, as many people of this age group have grown up with entertainment provided for them, rather than making it.

How are teams recruiting now? Is access to public transport a factor? How does the team culture attract - or deter - people joining? Where do most new recruits come from? Do teams attract people from other music, dance or other social groups? Is recruitment different in rural vs urban settings? Do teams try to seek out new places to dance or new audiences?

### **DIVERSITY**

Here is a short review of Jack Worth's presentation to a JMO audience on the latest morris census at: <https://www.morrisfed.org.uk/2021/03/21/morris-census-2020-results/> including a link to the full findings.

The census in 2020 shows a gender balance since 2017, with the average age being 55, comprising 7/10 over age 50 and only 1/10 under age 30. How do we recruit and retain younger people?

The census also shows that less than 1% is of a non-white ethnicity. That's really not very ethnically diverse at all! There is a hope - one would wish it not to be forlorn - that the removal of full-face black make-up from sides may start a conversation of Morris dancing being more welcoming and perhaps more diverse, but this is probably a decade-long projection, if at all.

We should acknowledge that many morris teams do already tick several boxes, including an adult age-spectrum, and exercise for many abilities (some sides have members with acknowledged physical impairments and/or learning difficulties).

Is it important for morris to reflect the diversity of our society? If so, how do we keep the gender balance while becoming more diverse in other areas where we are under-represented?

## 7 ELECTION OF COMMITTEE

Meeting to vote on the election of these two officer posts. The term of office is for three years starting on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2022. [Constitution section 4]

### (a) Secretary

Fee Lock is standing down this year. There has been one nomination, that of Andrew Knight, whose nomination is below:



<b>Committee Post:</b>	<b>Secretary</b>
<b>Name of Nominee:</b>	<b>Andrew Knight</b>
<b>Proposed by (Member)*:</b>	<b>Knights of King Ina</b>
<b>Secoded by (Member)*:</b>	<b>Knowle Morris</b>
Please state what skills, knowledge & experience you have that support your application for this post:	
<p>I work at professional level in private Osteopathic Practice seeing patients, booking appointments and meeting their various needs. I've been doing this successfully for 35 years; I can offer a good degree of communication and organisational skills to bring to Morris Federation in the role as secretary.</p> <p>I work in a consensus style of discuss and agree a way forward; I am inclusive by nature and able to draw ideas together to find a way forward.</p>	
Please state what other skills, knowledge & experience you can bring to the Committee as a whole:	
<p>I have been in morris sides for 25 years and at various times they have been members of all 3 of the UK Morris societies. I have been club treasurer, foreman and Squire at various times, I am known to be complete when undertaking a task, I feel it best done once and well. I understand and can work to deadlines.</p> <p>In other roles I have served 12 years as a school governor, with 4 years as chair; I have experience of collective responsibility and the rationale behind it.</p> <p>Whilst training for an application for a statutory role in my professional body I learned a lot about delivering information and on standards in public life, the role was to participate in investigating complaints within a committee of professional and lay members.</p>	

### (b) Notation Officer

This post is held by Jerry West, who is willing to stand again. No other nominations have been received.

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

Next year's AGM will be held on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2022 in Darlington as guests of Black Diamond Morris. We are looking for hosts for 2023 and 2024, so if you would like to host an AGM, please get in touch!

## **9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

None identified.

## **10 PRESENTATIONS AND VOTES OF THANKS**

By the end of this year, Fee Lock will have served 22 years as Secretary of the MF, and she is also our longest serving officer. It is impossible to thank her properly for all her time, energy and enthusiasm she has given to the MF, and we will miss her amazing breadth and depth of knowledge, her critical thinking and erudite comments. She was there at the start of the Joint Morris Organisations and we are pleased that she will continue in the role of JMO Secretary, as well as a co-opted member of the MF Committee. When we next meet in person, Fee Lock will formally receive a Butterworth badge (which she had made up!) showing her tenure of Secretary from 2000-2021.

AGM badges for last year's hosts (cancelled due to Covid-19) were sent to Tony Penneck of Customs & Exiles, with grateful thanks for their work and understanding of the situation.

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.