

NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR METAL DETECTING

**Minutes of the NCMD Annual General Meeting
Held on 23rd June 2024**

THOSE PRESENT

POLICY COMMITTEE (PC)

Alan Tamblyn - General Secretary (AT)

Siobhan Liehne - Treasurer (SL)

David Millington - Membership Secretary (DM)

Dave Crisp - Communications Officer (DC)

Stuart Greatorex - Committee Member (SG)

Ralph Green - Committee Member (RG)

Matthew Lines - Committee Member (ML)

TRUSTEES COMMITTEE (TC)

Adrian Tyrrell - Chair Trustees (ATY)

Martin Brickell - Trustee (MB)

Stuart Wilkinson - Trustee (SW)

1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES

AT welcomed everyone. There were no apologies.

2. INTRODUCTIONS – AII

For the purposes of the tape recording each attendee introduced themselves

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM AGM JUNE 2023

Approval of minutes from the AGM held in June 2023 were unanimously agreed.

4. OVERVIEW OF 2023/2024 - AT

Reference the following file - NCMD AGM Overview 2024/25

5. ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP REPORT 2023/2024 - DM

The Membership report was presented by DM. The PC unanimously accepted the report. DM answered several questions on how costs were being reduced. These were centred mostly around those members who forget to update their address details. As a result, renewal cards are sent to an old address and then returned by the Royal Mail to the NCMD PO Box.

Individually reposting these is time-consuming and expensive and so DM and SL have begun a process of immediately shredding these returned cards and the members concerned contacted by DM to be informed, and the member concerned now needs to pay £4 for a replacement card. This had been actioned several times without complaint from the members concerned. The PC agreed this was a legitimate way to reduce costs.

AT thanked DM for his continuing hard work and updating of the processes used in his work.

6. FINANCIAL REPORT 2023/2024 AND BUDGET FOR 2024/2025 - SL

The financial report was unanimously agreed by the PC as a true and accurate report. The following suggestions were put forward for the future. That graphs be used to better show income streams, trends, performance against budget etc. That expenditure from the legacy be given to the PC at monthly meetings.

SL explained to the PC that the NCMD had first heard of the Legacy (left to NCMD by an elderly lady in her will) way back in 2019 approx. but that probate had only been granted as recently as in 2023.

AT explained that, at a management meeting, it had been agreed by the PC that the funds be used to fund the NCMD Portal and some upgrading to the App as they were seen as the best possible way of ensuring the legacy was used to the benefit of the entire membership.

That SL be allowed to source and undertake training courses to increase ability to better disseminate financial information at future meetings.

SL agreed to implement all these suggestions.

The Trustees asked what the 'seed to NW clubs' referred to. SL explained that when the NW region was dissolved, they applied for and received a £1000 one off gift grant as a way of kick-starting their financial future and undertakings. This was to compensate them for losing the £2 levy per member that they had previously retained.

It was agreed that work needed to be done to determine what expected expenditure would be for the year 2024/2025 as there were several areas that we had discussed and planned to undertake, all requiring funds. SL said she would pick this up.

SL expressed her desire for the PC to convert those members who choose the 1-year deal to a multi-year option, as it saves costs. SL also asked the PC to discuss and implement ways to encourage take-up of Digital Only cards.

The Trustees asked SL to investigate the possibility of the NCMD undertaking a full financial audit as opposed to an examination. SL agreed to do that and to report back to the PC at the next monthly meeting but expected the accountants to dissuade us from that path as it would be a hugely expensive and time-consuming process costing many thousands of pounds. The Trustees then asked that SL speak with the accountants and ask what would be 'appropriate' for the NCMD to undertake. SL agreed to do this.

SG asked SL if she could produce a budget for everyday expenditures as well as some specific items for presentation at the next AGM in 2025 and this SL agreed to. Within this discussion was mention of such things as the newly devised Finds Competition. AT agreed that at the PC monthly meetings more definite plans would be agreed and that would include likely costs

AT thanked SL for her hard work throughout the year, particularly in safely distributing the Battle Fund across a number of accounts in order that all the NCMD assets are covered by the FSCS guarantee. This is an ongoing task as assets increase.

7. POLICIES, PROCESSES AND DOCUMENTATION UPDATE - DC

DC began by stating that all the policies so far created are now ready for publication but that there are several more to be created, an ongoing project. As fast as he thinks we are approaching completion, the need for a couple more become clear.

The Conflict-of-Interest document is almost ready.

DC thanked SL and SG for their continued assistance in scrutinising and editing policies as he created them, to ensure all angles were covered. He gave special thanks to SG as he was particularly good at picking up errors.

DC pointed out that the result of the earlier "EGM OPC members and Trustees meeting, above, had meant that the process for recruiting new ordinary PC members and Trustees was now finalised.

DC explained that plans are underway for policies and agreements to be devised for the expected Rallies Organisers/NCMD agreement, and that he and AT are collaborating on it.

DC is working on a set of guidelines for those members wishing to set up clubs and groups.

DC outlined plans for the revamped Finds Competition, renamed and brought up to date. He explained that Tracy Messer, our Media consultant, is working on this. He was hoping for the competition to be launched in August 2024.

DC informed the PC and Trustees of the good press received on the latest Digging Deep magazine. Most members received a digital copy only. Those who have not provided an email address, or specifically request it, receive a paper copy. This has hugely reduced printing costs. He explained that the issue was delayed as there were many updates to undertake before it could go to press.

He is already working on the 2024 edition. He is hopeful it will be issued before Christmas this time and that it would contain a puzzle page as a way of 'entertaining' our membership. DM asked that future editions are not issued too close to Christmas or the New Year, or Easter, as the contents have reminders to members to update their details and it resulted in him receiving a huge number of emails to deal with just as the holidays were starting. DC agreed to issue earlier at mid-December if possible.

The trustees asked if copies of the Digging Deep were being emailed to FLOs. AT explained that a copy was sent to Michael Lewis and that he would then cascade it to all FLOs. We are not able to send to the FLOs directly as we do not have their email details.

He ended by explaining that although the NCMD cannot be held responsible for members exporting finds abroad, we nevertheless have a responsibility to ensure all members are informed of the rules regulations and laws surrounding the exportation and importation of finds.

8. MERCHANDISING UPDATE - RG

The PC and the Trustees were updated by RG.

RG outlined that each member of the team had received 10 samples of merchandise. There followed a discussion on the various items and their merits etc. DM felt that the quality of the goods was not as he would have liked to see. AT explained that we had to put quality up against price point and there would always be some kind of compromise. The need for drop-shipping was paramount, as the NCMD did not have the facility, the staff, the time or the storage needed for all these products.

As part of the discussion AT informed the team that the need to try and keep to one supplier was important to avoid the situation where a member buys one item from one supplier and buys a second item from another supplier, thereby incurring 2 lots of postage and packaging costs. The ideal situation would be for us to think of a product and then ask Wolds (our preferred supplier) if they could provide their own version.

RG related how he had taken all the items to a club meeting and showed them to the club members. The feedback he got was very positive about quality and expected prices. The only negative comment was over the bobble on the baseball cap.

It was suggested that it would press into the wearers skull if also wearing headphones. However, this was deemed a non-argument as virtually all baseball caps on the market have a bobble right at the top where all the seams meet, and it was not a remark that anyone had ever heard being made of any baseball cap, ever.

RG explained that he felt a mark-up of approx. 25% would be appropriate, with a rounding up to the nearest sensible figure.

AT asked for a vote that we would go ahead with Wolds, that we would ask them about further products as we thought of them and that the Merchandising page would go ahead on the website. The vote for this was unanimous.

9. TECHNOLOGY UPDATE - AT

AT informed everyone that Brave Bear were in the process of finalising everything that needed to be done towards the re-skinning of the website, the migrating of documents from the old website, and the App upgrade.

It was hoped that the PC would get their first look at the re-skinned website in early July with the aim of launching during July. Arrangements for the videos, designed to promote the App etc. are well advanced. AT announced that there are early plans for the NCMD to produce podcasts for the membership.

Some annual website traffic figures were presented to the PC to illustrate the traffic on the website etc. and these are detailed in the Technology Update file.

ML asked if there would be QR codes on the reskinned website and AT assured him there would be.

10. NCMD FINDS COMPETITION – AT

Plans for the format of the Competition are well underway. The PC needed to vote on the prize money awarded.

SL pointed out that she was unhappy that the proposed award money meant those winners aged under 16 would receive less than their adult counterparts, when the finds they make are not age specific. A child could well find something of great importance in the same way as an adult. SL, ML et al suggested that the categories should not be age specific at all but simply open to the whole membership regardless of age.

AT reminded those present that the NCMD are actively promoting the free membership for under 16's to encourage new and young blood into the hobby and that the 2 age groups would help towards that aim. AT also reminded the PC that there were, at present, approx. 160 under 16's up against well over 30,000 adults. There followed a spirited discussion with all participants giving various options as a solution. Following this a vote was taken on the monthly categories first.

That the categories for the monthly competition should be split into Best Coin and Best Artefact and that there should be 2 age groups, under 16's and Over 16's. The vote was unanimous and therefore carried.

That the monthly prize for over 16's should be £100 and a plaque to keep. The vote was a majority of 9 to 1 in favour and therefore carried.

That the prize for under 16's should be £100 and a plaque to keep. The vote was a majority 8 to 2 in favour and therefore carried.

That there should be no age categories for the annual competition leaving just one overall winner for each of Best Coin, Best Artefact and Best Hoard (if indeed there be one as hoards are rare). The vote was a majority of 7 to 3 and therefore carried.

That the annual prize for overall winner should be £500.00 and a trophy to keep for each of Best Coin, Best Artefact and Best Hoard (if one is entered). The vote was a majority of 9 to 1 in favour and therefore carried.

That there should be an overall annual prize for under 16's.

The vote was a majority in favour therefore carried.

A suggestion was made to award vouchers rather than money, but this was not regarded as a good move as there would be unhappy retailers if their vouchers were not used but a perceived competitor's was.

There followed an explanation of the rules that would apply to the competition. These would be made available at the point of launch.

11. NCMD PROJECTS FOR 2024-2025 – AT

The list of projects is extensive and those present are concerned that AT and DC are taking on too much.

AT assured those present that most of the work they are involved with had been completed and now is simply down to overseeing outside suppliers and organisations and that they feel they are now nearing the 'light at the end of the tunnel'. AT also made the point that any one of the PC could help with any one of the projects for the next year.

12. CLUB DEFINITION - All

This was a discussion topic. It centred around the phrase 'What is a club?' The aim was to determine whether a 'club' fulfilled a set of criteria that would allow them to become registered as such with the NCMD.

Generally, a club had been regarded as a group of people, who come together to form a Club Committee. There would be a constitution, a bank account and at least 3 officers, namely Secretary, Membership Secretary and Treasurer. Meetings expected to be held at least monthly, minutes taken, and an AGM held annually along with a set of accounts.

However, it is recognised that the rise of social media has presented the NCMD with a whole new world.

The discussion was varied with lots of options given for what the NCMD should regard as a Club rather than just a Group. It was suggested that there could even be several classifications. Among the questions raised was 'if someone forms a club but earns money from it, is that still a club?' It was generally felt that that would be a business, not a club. Another question 'would it change things if the money earned was awarded to charity?' Generally, it was thought that it might.

It would also make a difference if the whole of an entrance fee went to the farmer. Some 'clubs' pay a proportion to the landowner and the rest goes into 'club funds', forming yet another classification. The discussion gave AT and Dc and DM the framework they felt they needed to form a Club Definition, and they will report back.

13. AOCB - All

DM brought up the issue of the virus that had resulted in huge email problems for him, now resolved. The rest of us were warned as soon as he found out and were able to immediately delete the rogue email. DM asked us to consider buying him an Apple laptop as he felt it would be much more secure.

A discussion followed and this raised questions such as the cost. The fact was that he already had a Windows laptop provided by the NCMD, and we needed to formulate a plan

as to what would happen to it once it became surplus to requirements. It transpired that the membership database is held in the cloud and is therefore safe, but no-one felt confident enough to state that as definite.

At the end of the discussion the PC felt that it would be sensible to take expert advice on the Apple versus PC question and what else the NCMD could do to protect its business information and files. AT would report back to the PC as soon as he had the necessary answers.

PAS CONFERENCE

Being held in September, AT asked the PC if anyone wanted to go along with him and Dave. He also mentioned that a day at the British Museum for the PC and Trustees would be informative, and would go a long way towards raising the NCMD's profile with the staff at the BM. He asked if anyone would be interested, and most people present were. SL is planning a trip to London in 2025 and had already offered to AT to give firm dates to him asap so we could build a BM visit in with them.

3- OR 5-YEAR TENURE FOR OCM AND TRUSTEES - AT

At present the Constitution states that Trustees and OCM's should be in post for 3 years. Given that we have a brand-new set of 3 OCM's and 3 new Trustees, that would potentially mean the NCMD having to recruit 6 new people all at once in 2026.

This is not ideal. It was also felt that given the NCMD was starting over with a completely new constitution, new policies etc, it was effectively a learning curve and would be for a good 5, 6 or even as many as 10 years yet.

Therefore, the suggestion was that staggering the leaving dates for this first turnover beginning 2026 would be a good idea. The question then was how to achieve it. Several options were discussed but it really came down to this;

1 OCM and 1 Trustee vacates their position at the 3-year point, 1 of each at the 4-year point and 1 of each at the 5-year point, spreading the load over 3 years. AT mentioned he had already had volunteers for the first pair but was keeping those names confidential for the moment.

The Constitution would also be changed to add in that the standard tenure would still be 3 years, but the tenure could be extended to 5 years if required for operational reasons.

That the standard tenure for an OCM or a trustee remains at 3-years but can be extended to 5-years for operational reasons, the Constitution to reflect that. That a pairing of 1 OCM and 1 Trustee would be at 3 years, the next pairing at 4-years and the final pairing at 5- years. The vote was unanimous and therefore carried.

14. NEXT AGM MEETING DATE

28/29 JUNE 2025 SL to book rooms and meeting-room asap.