

NONSUCH DULCIMER CLUB
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
October 25th 2025
at Malvern St James School

MINUTES

1. 45 members were in attendance including five on-line attendees. Apologies were received from Rick James and Ellen Chisman.

2. **Minutes** of the meeting of **19th October 2024** were distributed with the notice of this meeting and also published in the Nonsuch Newsletter. Motion to Approve the minutes: Proposer Judith van Dijkhuizen, seconder Jim Campell - All were in favour.

3. Matters Arising

Heather Whittle wondered about a geo-map of members with post codes which was proposed. Sally Whytehead replied that we are concerned that permission is needed from members to comply with UK GDPR. The information is in the directory anyway and a map would also need to be stored online.

4. Result of Postal and Online Voting

Voting closed at 24:00 on 21st October 2024, and was counted by the scrutineers. The results are as follows

a) Election of trustee: James (known as Hamish) Cormie
Results: For 40, Against 1, Abstentions 2, Totalling 43 Votes.

Therefore Hamish Cormie is duly elected for another term

Note: Sandra Hudson, William Duddy and Christine Fitt are continuing as Trustees, as their 3 year term is ongoing. Sally Whytehead has completed a 3 year term and is not standing for re-election.

b) Approval of the Trustees' Annual Report, Accounts and Independent Examiner's Report to the Charities Commission for the period 01/04/2024 to 31/3/2025

Results: For 42, Against 0, Abstentions 1, Total 43 Votes. Approved.

5. **Feedback** following on last year's discussion about attracting more members especially younger ones. This was presented by Chris Fitt who has been in contact with several members who are willing to be involved in discussions. Chris felt there are three areas to focus on -

- a) There is an audience of primary school children to whom the instruments can be introduced.
- b) KS3 pupils/students/young adults could be in a better position to pursue the instrument.
- c) The newly retired who have time and cash!

Social Media cannot be ignored. We have different levels of interest and skills in this.

Following an appeal for help which had pleasing results including someone with Social Media experience, there is the possibility of future requests to members for help in these areas with a view to enhancing the club's social media effectiveness.

Chris Fitt said that social media outlets – including the Nonsuch YouTube channel – could be particularly effective in attracting/interesting younger players. She has already sounded out Colin Beasley who has indicated that he would be happy to have his work featured on our social media.

Comments were invited -

Judith van Dijkhuizen suggested that new A5 flyers could promote the Matt Fox bursary.

Amanda Collicutt said that the flyers also need YouTube information and a QR code to a webpage with more information.

Sheila Bryant asked 'What is the philosophy about needing more members? as some venues will be filled eg Halsway.

Chris Fitt stressed the real advantage is the support which a club like ours offers to new players.

Sally Whytehead pointed out that we need to reduce the average age so we don't die out!

Lisa Warburton said effective marketing can open up more opportunities for member involvement eg on committee, local groups.

Sally Whytehead commented that we are steadily increasing by c. 6-7% per year.

Ruth Wilson said that we ought to come up first on Social Media searches.

Jan Cormie commented on where new members come from e.g. quite a few from America as well as folk festivals at which Geoff Reeve Black has run workshops

Chris Fitt said the MD outreach workshops in particular are having a great positive effect but it's harder to get people to try out the HD. Also difficulty of finding events which would suit us. If members are aware of events we could be involved in, please let us know. HDs are available for workshops.

Sally Whytehead said we do have quite a few overseas members, mainly USA and Europe.

Hamish Cormie said we still need members to join the committee to help run the club.

Peter Bromwich mentioned the Beginners' Workshops which are available for both instruments.

Richard Szabranski wondered about the ethos of increasing numbers? It should not be just for the sake of it. We need to create a nurturing environment so people want to come. Do we provide this? We need to get the word out.

Sally felt that we do have the right ethos, we just don't shout about it enough!

Peter Collinson suggested WhatsApp groups could be considered to talk to lots of people.

Beth Thomas said members could help each other so everyone would benefit and mentioned the Groups.IO Platform which is more private than Facebook.

Lynn Clearwaters suggested people serve on committee for specific shorter times and shadow a role for one year before taking up a position.

Hamish Cormie wondered about people being on committee without specific roles but rather just to contribute ideas.

Chris Fitt is aware people don't necessarily want to be on an official committee but are happy to help with specific tasks, which is welcomed.

6. Discussion about **future activities**

Due to time constraints, this aspect will be covered via communications with members

7. **Any Other Business.**

Sally Whytehead is no longer a Trustee, she did not stand for re-election, and has also stepped down as Chair. Chris Fitt has been voted by the Trustees to the position of Chair.

Sally will take over officially as Treasurer, a role she has fulfilled for several years with assistance from Steve Herron-Thompson.

Sally has done a vast amount for the club over the years including leading us into Charitable status and spear-heading every aspect of the Dulcimer World Congress in 2015 which was brilliant thanks to her vision. Geoff Reeve-Black thanked Sally for what she has done for us - there was much applause! She was then presented with a hand-made fabric gift bag containing two Welsh Tune Books.

Sandie Hudson is 'retiring' from the Nonsuch Newsletter after the next issue having edited it for 7 years and done a fantastic job - there were enthusiastic cheers from attendees! Sandie was presented with a gift from the club - a framed print of the front covers of many of 'her' issues of Nonsuch News as well as a hand-made fabric gift bag.

An official Vote of Thanks was proposed by Peter Collinson and seconded by Jan Cormie.

Ken Hudson is stepping down from presenting the on-line music podcast "Dulcimer Junction" and is happy to guide someone new in the role.

Judith van Dijkhuizen proposed a vote of thanks which was seconded by Peter Bromwich.

Steve Gray has taken on the role of Newsletter editor. There are several more volunteers with whom we are in discussion concerning various roles.

William Duddy, online, added his thanks to both Sandie and Sally for their roles and congratulated Chris Fitt and Hamish Cormie on their appointments.

He also thanked the organisers of the Annual Weekend and Richard Szabranski and Geoff for the technology enabling the on-line participation.

Geoff Reeve-Black suggested a pull-up banner or similar for events, perhaps more than one if possible. This was considered a good idea.

Pieter Blonde commented that, in Flanders, photos of Dulcimer players often have only older people. We too need younger people in our publicity e.g. 30 - 40 age group.

Ruth Wilson said the repertoire featured in our social media needs to be more relevant to a wider audience.

Geoff Reeve-Black thanked Fenella in her secretarial role for this meeting.

Paul Crocker gave thanks to the committee and the club for help supporting dulcimer meetings in Horfield, Bristol.

Heather Whittle suggested Val Cortoni could make some videos for us.

Next Year's Annual Meeting will be at Malvern St James from Friday 23rd to Monday 26th October 2026.

Date of next AGM will be on Saturday October 24th 2026 at this event.

The Meeting closed at 17.24

Minutes taken by Fenella Howard.