

SASS Annual General Meeting
Minutes of Meeting
Friday, 11th October 2024
19:00 – 20:00
St James' Parish Hall

Attendees (28 total):

Achuil Monytoch, Aruni McShane, Diana Amaya, Emilie Short, Fumiko Kato, Hazel Nixon, Helen Clancy, John Sayce, Kathryn Jones, Kevin Williams, Lilian Kujabi, Luel Memihr, Lynne Berezanski, Maria Nicholas, Martin White, Mehdi Asghari, Pam Mayford, Phil Nicholas, Saleha Zarif, Sam Edwards, Sandra Morton, Shah Rahmani, Sue Maw, Sweeta Durrani, Tom Cheesman, Venus Durrani, Wayne Yare, Zakarya Rezali.

Apologies (12 total): Antje Vöge-Dyson, Bev Dobson, Clare Jones, Domini Lewis, Emma Williams, Fru Delvis Ngang, Gill Hull, Jo Furber, Margaret Lamb, Ruth Ibarra, Sherry Coates, Steve Pullinger.

1. WELCOME - SANDRA MORTON, CHAIR

Sandra welcomed everyone to this year's AGM.

2. APOLOGIES

See above.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF 8th September 2023

Minutes were circulated prior to the AGM.

The minutes of the previous AGM were approved unanimously.

4. TRUSTEES REPORT FOR 2023 – SANDRA MORTON, CHAIR

Report was circulated prior to the AGM. [The full Trustees Annual Report \(TAR\) can be accessed on the SASS website.](#)

- Thank you to everyone at SASS; the Trustees, volunteers and donors are all vital and appreciated. A special thank you to our paid workers - Delphine, Diana, Fru, George, Hazel, Ruth, Sue, and Wayne - and to Funmi, who is stepping down as a Trustee after many years of loyal service.

Achievements from 2023

- Welcome to Play started in early 2023, funded by The National Lottery Community Fund and Children in Need. This has been an outstanding success and continues to grow.
- We are proud to have over 100 active volunteers, made up asylum seekers, refugees and other local people. We are lucky to have so many dedicated people.
- There has been a 35% increase in attendance in 2023, which reflects an increased need, and that people want to come to SASS.

- We have had 10 Trustees this year, 5 of whom are people with lived experience. The Advisory Group also meets regularly.
- Our partnerships and awareness raising continues to grow - with strong connections with UiD, Discovery, Adult Learning Wales, the Social Work department. At the end of 2023 we are holding a week-long art exhibition and sale to raise money and awareness. We will be selling two books, published by Hafan Books, written by our volunteers Martha and Aruni.
- We continue to work together as a team. That is SASS.

The Annual Report was approved unanimously.

5. FINANCIAL REPORT FOR 2023 – TOM CHEESMAN, TREASURER

Finance report was circulated prior to the AGM as part of the Trustees Annual Report (TAR).

- Our income this year was nearly £147,000. We spent £133,00 and had £14,000 surplus. We are solvent and have no debts.
- In 2023, we received money from 25 different grants, which requires a lot of work in the background. Thank you to Ach, Delphine, Diana, Sam, and Sherry for their efforts.
- We received around £25,000 in donations from the public, with around 100 people donating each month. This is a lot of support. Thank you to our donors.
- We were adopted as Charity of the Year by the President of UNISON, Libby Nolan, which led to £7000 donations, although most of these appear in 2024 accounts.

The Financial Report was approved unanimously.

6. APPOINTMENT OF TRUSTEES FOR 2024/25

Last year, there were 10 Trustees (5 of whom were people with lived experience of the asylum system).

This year, there are 14 Trustees for approval (7 of whom are people with lived experience).

Standing for election:

- Achuil Monytoch
- Aruni McShane
- Clare Jones
- Fru-Delvis Ngang
- Kathryn Jones
- Kevin Williams
- Lilian Kujabi
- Mehdi Askari
- Phil Nicholas
- Sandra Morton
- Shabsavar Rahmani
- Sherry Coates
- Sweeta Durrani
- Tom Cheesman

This Trustee board was approved unanimously.

7. SINCE 2023 – HIGHLIGHTS & CHALLENGES

- The Snakes & Ladders game was developed for the UNISON conference, with contributions from Ach, Aruni, Diana, Fru, and Sweeta. The design was created by local designer Harry. This project has been a big success for us, and we hope to develop it further.
- Attendance numbers continue to rise, with over 150 people on most Fridays, and between 80-100 on Saturdays. We have people attend from around 36 different countries.
- Welcome to Play is also seeing increasing attendance. We are looking at moving the older children to the main hall for part of the session.
- Community Lunch at St James Church was very successful, with 135 attending. We would like to do this again.
- Sue (ESOL Coordinator) and Diana (Activities Leader) have joined our team and are already going from strength to strength.
- We are training more volunteers than ever, with food safety, safeguarding and First Aid. We also have 4 courses with Adult Learning Wales, due to popularity of the 2 which ran in 2023.
- Fru has been working on a Needs Assessment Infographic, which gives a good representation of what is happening, and needs that need to be met.
- Challenges we are facing include: grants, finance, space, increased need, recording the impact of SASS.

8. QUESTIONS, DISCUSSION, SUGGESTION, FUTURE PLANS

- Various attendees thanked SASS, particularly Sandra, for the work done this year
- It was suggested that a system be developed to make sign-ins easier, as the current process is paper-based. It was noted that this is an ongoing discussion and should be approached carefully, given previous resistance. The possibility of visiting other groups to see how they manage sign-ins was raised.
- Suggestion that people could be encouraged to make more use of their own skills, with small, low-effort activities to help build confidence.
- Storage issue was raised. Ideas included introducing a computerised system for donations and using a token system to ensure dignity and fairness. The token system worked well at Christmas, but space remains a challenge.
- Toiletry donations used to be distributed from a tub carried around, but are now managed in a separate room, which provides more control. Toiletries are easier to manage as they are small items, though it was noted that single men are often left behind.
- The church development plan includes the addition of two extra rooms upstairs but will not be complete for a little while.

No other business, so the meeting closed.