

1. Attendance, Apologies for absence and Welcome

1.1 Attendance:

Tom Broomfield (Finance Director & Norbit)  
Trish Buxton (Chair & Teledyne Geospatial)  
Becky Conway (CEO & Oceanwise)  
David Buxton (Next Geosolutions)  
Martin Webb (Peel Ports)  
Amelia Carver  
Fergal McGrath  
Paul Hanna  
William Heaps  
John Touma (sp?)  
Chris Almond  
Richard Cattermole  
Hilary Morgan  
Iain Slade  
Imran Eyre  
James Williams (Swath & USS)  
Lisette Rimmer  
Kirsty Ferris  
Tobias Fok  
Dimitre Kioussi  
John Dillon-Leetch (Port of London)  
Geraint West (Sonardyne)  
Andy Swain  
Mark Poole  
David Parker  
Simon Canning  
Ian Holden  
Gordon Johnston  
John Pinder  
Tony White

1.2 Welcome

Trish Buxton, Chair of THS:UKI, welcomed everyone to the 2024 Annual General Meeting, thanked all for taking some time to join today.

1.3 Apologies for absence were received from:

Ian Russel  
Ben Sansome

Paul Edge  
Svetlana Klockova  
Mike Trannah  
Chris Burls  
Richard New  
Mike Sebbage

2. Consideration and acceptance of the Minutes of the 19th AGM held on 18th April 2023 (to be taken as read)

The Minutes were accepted without amendment.

Proposed by: Simon Canning Seconded by: William Heaps

3. Consideration and acceptance of the Report of the Management Committee and Financial Statement for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 (to be taken as read)

Chair: The draft copy of the Report of the Board and Financial Statement for the year ended 31st March 2023 has been circulated. We were hoping to have had this finalized by now but there were several queries raised that needed to be addressed as well as delays in correspondence. We are currently signing this and the Auditor will be submitting them as final before the end of the month.

Proposed by: Martin Webb Seconded by: Simon Canning

4. Appointment of Auditors to audit the Society's accounts for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 and authorisation of the Board to fix their remuneration

Chair: The current accountants are Simpkins Edwards and continue to provide a good service to us. I will caveat this however that we are about to undertake a process of reviewing providers as a matter of due diligence. This will be based on what service can be provided, not just based on price.

For the purposes of this meeting, without another option to recommend, it is recommended that Simpkins Edwards should be appointed as the Society's auditors and financial advisers.

Accepted by all in principle but membership would like a review completed of options.

5. Consideration of the Reports from:

Chief Executive – Becky Conway

### **Chief Executive Report to AGM 2024**

Good Afternoon all, for those that don't know me, I'm Becky Conway and was appointed as Chief Executive of the Hydrographic Society UK & Ireland in July 2022. During my report I will run through the events and activities of the Society over the year since the last AGM, highlighting some key milestones we have achieved and our direction for the coming year.

### **Membership and Society Operation**

Let's start with an overview of our membership. At last year's AGM I reported that we were experiencing a steady increase in both corporate and individual membership following a period of decline. I am pleased to inform you that this increase has continued and we currently stand at a total of 383 members. This is made up of 83 corporate members, and 300 individual members of which 34 are Student and New Graduate members. (78 Corporate, 3 Associate Corporate, 2 Emeritus Corporate, 208 Individual, 50 Retired, 34 Student & New Graduate, 8 Emeritus).

In comparison to membership levels in January 2023 when we had a total of 231 made up of 36 corporate members and 195 Individuals, this is a significant increase and one which is testament to the hard work of Operations and Engagement Manager Derek and the importance of this role, as well as the promotion of the Society through the events which have been put on over the last year, in particular Remote Hydrography 2024 (more on this later).

Despite this healthy increase in membership, we are still not at a level where membership income is enough to sustain the Society alone. Therefore, with the new membership year fast approaching I wanted to take this opportunity to ask you all to please try and encourage your colleagues and organisations to join and support our community. Significant efficiencies are now being realised in the management of membership and renewals through the Society's website, and we have a much better oversight of our ongoing status. This will be the first renewal period run through the website and tests have been carried out and checks made to hopefully ensure this runs smoothly, however please bear with us if issues do crop up, we will endeavour to resolve these as soon as we can.

Moving onto looking at the Society's operations, this time last year I informed you that the Society had successfully filled the Operations and Engagement Manager position with Derek Rae who over the past year, despite the challenges faced with his health, has done a tremendous job with engaging with our existing and new members, as well as managing the smooth transfer of all membership to the THS:UKI website, and many other tasks in parallel.

As I reported last year Derek's health took an unexpected turn for the worse and following his return to work on reduced hours, he has made the hard decision to resign from his role as OEM at the end of April. The Society understand and support his decision although it will be a great shame to see him leave, and I would like to take this opportunity to formally thank Derek for his hard work during his time with the Society.

Recruitment for the OEM role is underway with a number of applications received which are being reviewed and I will update you through the Society's communication channels on the outcome as soon as I can.

### **Branches and Events**

Moving on to Branch activity and events, our Branch committees continue to do a sterling job at putting on some fantastic events for our members and assisting in raising awareness of the Society and Hydrographic profession. I won't steal their thunder by going into details of what they have been up to, I'll let them update you shortly. Instead, I want to thank the Branch committees for their continued hard work and encourage all members to support these events wherever you can, in particular a call to Corporate members to host or sponsor events where possible is always appreciated.

One event which I will talk about though is the return of Remote Hydrography to Dublin last month for 2 days of conference and exhibition with ample networking and social opportunities surrounding it. The event was a great success and a testament to the dedication and commitment of everyone involved towards the advancement of remote hydrography and all it encompasses. In terms of numbers, we had a

total of 181 delegate tickets sold and a near sell out of exhibition space with a total of 23 companies being involved in the exhibition and sponsorship of the event. The final financials are being processed but I am pleased to report that we will have made a healthy profit in the region of £45,000. I am extremely proud of how the event went and would like to echo my thanks from my closing remarks at the event to the organising committee – Mark, Sean, Gordon, Fergal, David, John, Iain, Nicki, Tom, Trish and Gill. As well as acknowledging our partners Geological Survey Ireland, Marine Institute, INFOMAR and Failte Ireland who were instrumental in enabling us to put on the event.

Over the past couple of years, a lot of work has gone into promoting the benefits of being part of THS:UKI and there's still a lot more to do. But it was really encouraging to see that for Remote Hydrography 2024, 70% of delegates registered were corporate or individual members of THS:UKI or other national societies. The Hydrographic Professional Accreditation Scheme (HPAS)

Last year I reported that we were in the process of recruiting for the role of HPAS Coordinator and IFHS Secretariat and I am pleased to update you that Yvonne Liversidge joined us in August last year and since then has made a very positive impact on the promotion and coordination of HPAS.

The last intake in October 2023 saw 11 applicants mostly from the UK and is a significant increase in application numbers compared to previous intakes, bringing the total number of those registered with HPAS to 29. Deadline for the upcoming intake is the end of this month and if you haven't already, then please drop by the THS:UKI stand and speak to Yvonne to find out more about HPAS and how you can get involved.

### **Future Strategy**

So having reported on what we have achieved during the past year, this leads me on to looking to the future and what we have to come. One aspect I will be focusing on in the coming months is to have a clear financial model of the operation of the Society to enable us to plan our finances more effectively and identify opportunities to invest funds into the Education Fund and our CCLA account.

A key focus for the Society over the coming year will remain to be Education particularly following the positive response to the student and early experience session at Remote Hydrography. The Society will continue to support the Education Committee with their plans to drive hydrographic awareness in schools and universities as well as promoting our profession and striving to diversify the current and future workforces. In the past year we have more than doubled our Student membership from 16 to 34 but there is still a lot more work to do.

You will hopefully have all noticed that we have remained on track with Soundings publication as well as the fortnightly e-bulletins. It remains a high priority to maintain these schedules and evaluate how we can improve our communication channels with our members and wider hydrographic industry, any suggestions are always welcome.

Finally, as you know in order to sustain the Society we need to run large events such as Remote Hydrography to boost finances as well as providing opportunities for knowledge sharing, networking and of course a good reason to all get together! I am therefore pleased to say that following on from Hydro24 this November in Rostock, THS:UKI will be hosting Hydro25. More details to follow in the coming months so please keep an eye out for these and support us where you can.

On that exciting note I will leave it there by saying thank you for all your continued support and urge you all to spread the word of the Society, ultimately with more members we can invest and do more as a Society across the industry.

Questions following CEO report:

James Williams asked about membership numbers and how this has changed over the years. Becky confirmed that a breakdown is being prepared and will be issued in soundings – showing a recent history and distribution of members.

David Parker suggested looking into offering incentives to attract more members. One discussion point was regarding including membership in ticket prices (for events). Other ways should be investigated.

Honorary Finance Director – Tom Broomfield

As noted, the draft accounts have been circulated and are expected to be final soon. In addition to the report from our CEO; the following is *added following AGM*: financial summary is as follows:

Financial review

The net deficit for the year was £12,036 (2022: £3,077 surplus). After subtracting this to the accumulated funds brought forward of £165,771 (£145,798 unrestricted funds and £19,973 restricted funds), there is a balance of reserves of £153,735 to carry forward within the Society. This consists of £134,914 unrestricted funds and £18,821 restricted funds.

Taken from: ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS YE March 2023

Small discussion about Remote Hydrography monies raised and when added to finances. Positive overall for coming year pending membership growth and events

Suggestion that we could consider promoting legacy gifts – perhaps an article in soundings.

The Regions

East Anglia – Kirsty Ferris, Chair

To be inserted before wide circulation.

Ireland - Seán Cullen, Chair (unavailable for meeting)

Fergal McGrath said that the branch was small but growing – supported by Remote Hydrography event, The branch have also been increasing engagement with corporate entities such as XOCEAN in addition to engagement with MSc students. The committee is small. Fergal also noted that some members from the branch had gone through HPAS.

Scotland – Simon Canning, Chair

The AGM was held at the Palm Court Hotel in Aberdeen on January 31st, 2024. Our 2024 office bearers and committee were confirmed during the AGM, we are very fortunate to have a strong and varied committee of 28, with some new faces joining to bring lots of fresh ideas. We combined the AGM with 3 presentations around the subject of the Mayflower, past and present, our presenters and presentations were as follows;

- Dr Kathryn Gray, Associate Professor of Early American Literature from the University of Plymouth -The Story of the Early Mayflower Voyages;
- Jo Loosemore, Curator of the Mayflower 400 exhibition at The Box in Plymouth – The Mayflower 400 Exhibition;

- Brett Phaneuf, President of Submergence Group – Mayflower Autonomous Ship (MAS) Project.

Our Annual Members Dinner (AMD) was held on 23rd March at the Chester Hotel in Aberdeen. This was the largest AMD event we have hosted to date, with over 260 corporate members and guests in attendance. All our AMD guests had a fabulous evening and enjoyed the fine food, socialising and entertainment, while raising over £5,000 for our charities MapAction and North Aberdeenshire Foodbank.

A huge thank you to our very generous sponsors who were Andrews Survey, Miros, Reach Subsea and UTEC Survey as Gold sponsors, Oceaneering, Seatronics, Subsea7 and Unique Group as Silver sponsors and Norbit and Savante as Bronze sponsors. In addition Ashtead organised a Special Raffle Prize with all proceeds being split between our charities. It was a super evening, hosted by our Chairman, Simon Canning with the excellent Dr. Dave providing the after-dinner laughs.

Thank you to everyone who attended and our fabulous committee for pulling off such a successful event, particularly Nicki Nicholls who is the main protagonist in this annual extravaganza.

Hot on the heels of the Annual Dinner, we held our first live evening event of the year on March 29th which was a departure from our normal evening meeting. The brains behind the evening was committee member Duncan Allen who came up with the idea of 'Sensors and Stuff'. The evening was another triumph with over 80 people in attendance.

As sure as night follows day, our next event in the calendar was our annual Hydrofest event, a day dedicated to Hydrographic Survey for the offshore energy sector. This day is ideal for those considering a career in Hydrographic Survey or for those that are already connected to the industry and would like to learn more about the part that Hydrographic Survey plays in the big picture.

We held the event on 21st April at the Sandman Hotel in Aberdeen and were delighted to welcome a line-up of industry professionals to guide us through the day. Simon, our Chairman was once again busy hosting the day which saw over 80 attendees made up of university students, industry delegates and our supporting exhibitors.

A huge thank you to our presenters who made it possible Nicki Nicholls (Andrews Survey), Laura Thomson (UTEC), Eddie Milne (Veripos), Duncan Allen (Subsea7), Michael Murray (UTEC), Dave McLoughlin (Andrews Survey) and Martin Berry (Subsea7).

We received very positive feedback from the students who attended and from the more senior members of the community, so will continue to delivery this event each year.

One of our most fun events, and it has to said our most anticipated event return finally happened on May 18th at Aberdeen University. After a 3-year break, we welcomed over 260 school pupils aged 11-14 to join us for a morning to learn about 'Surveying for the Energy Industry'. The morning included Walter Jardine showing everyone how Hydrographic Survey is used in all stages of building an energy field. This was followed by our ROV Racing Challenge where pupils from each school raced ROVs through the Forum Visualsoft underwater maze, with the winner taking home the coveted trophy. Kate McCubbin then showed everyone what it is like to work offshore and the different places she has worked, with Richard Mason from Survey Solutions providing a real-time 3D laser scan of the packed room to show the many ways that the survey tools can be used. We had a poster competition with some fabulous and creative entries plus many prizes through the morning to encourage questions and engagement.

Andy Dare must be thanked for organising the event for the 8th year, and based on the comments received from the schools, we now look forward to the 2024 event.

On 24th May, we were back at the Palm Court Hotel in Aberdeen for another evening event. With the topic of 'Cable Tracking Technology' the evening certainly attracted a large audience with lively discussion and everyone enjoying the opportunity to network after the presentations. Our thanks to our speaker Jack McCusker of SMD and Prash Poosappadi of Kraken Robotics.

Following our evening meeting in May, the branch took a break from events over the summer months. BUT – in July we received the results of the Hydrographic Module assessment as part of the Geospatial & Mapping Sciences MSc course from Glasgow University lecturer, William Kelly.

We had changed our Student Award Program for 2023, and had agreed with the University that our award would recognise the highest achieving students in the Hydrographic Module with a top prize and two runner up prizes. This award is being made in memory of Danny Wake, who was not only a huge character in the Hydrographic community but was also a former Glasgow University student.

To welcome our everyone back after the summer break, we held our first 'Super Summer Social' at ResidentX in Aberdeen on August 31st. This event was suggested and planned by committee members Rachel Harold and Laura Thompson, and will now be a firm favourite in our annual calendar as it seems that there is a keen interest in the informal catch up format, who would have thought it!! We had a great turn out, the venue provided a perfect space for socialising and the food options were varied.

On Thursday September 14th, the annual sporting highlight of the Hydrographic Society Scotland Branch's calendar came to Aberdeenshire's picturesque Kemnay Golf Club. This year, 10 teams battled it out to claim bragging rights as the best team of golfers in the subsea sector.

With Unique Systems having won the last two outings, the THSiS golf day organisers were worried that history would repeat itself and they would win it again (nothing against them, but we'd like to see someone else winning!). To be fair to Unique, they also recognised this as a possibility and changed their 2023 team line up to give someone else a chance of winning (thanks Brook!). Would Unique make in three-in a row? Would another team win? Would it rain on the day?

Unlike last year, the weather gods were smiling on us, and we were treated to some glorious sunshine and some decent temperatures.

Once again, we invited companies to sponsor the golf outing. And what a difference it does make. Unique Group (UK) sponsored the nearest-the-pin and Norbit sponsored the longest drive. Ashtead Technology did us the honour of sponsoring the bar at the end of the day. All profits from the sponsors will go towards funding the societies activities such as the school's initiative, education awards, the and Hydrofest. So many thanks to Unique Group, Norbit and Ashtead Technology for making a great day even better. We would like also to acknowledge the very generous donations of prizes by all the teams that entered. This year's prize donation box was so crammed, we were able to have prizes for the top four individual players and a prize for each team that competed.

It was close, but in the end it was the MacArtney team who won on 77 points, narrowly beating the Unique System team (also on 77 points) on countback. Congratulations to the MacArtney team of Scott Lee, Mike Clark and Stuart McPherson. We hope to see you back next year to defend your title.

The individual winners prize went to Prash Poosappadi from the Kraken Robotics team with a total of 42 points. Runner up individual was David Gebbie from the UTEC team with a score of 38 points. Nearest-the-pin prize on the 6th hole went to Stuart McPherson who was playing in the MacArtney team. Longest drive prize on the 15th hole was awarded to Bruce Henderson from the Ashtead Technology team.

Many thanks to everyone who played on the day and a big thanks to our sponsors, and thanks to Kemnay Golf Club for hosting us once again. The course was in great shape and the catering before and after the golf was really good.

The committee is very grateful to Alan MacDonald for once again putting together a great event and also to Ross Ingram and Colin Kirk who ran the event on the day.

Wednesday 4th October saw us back at the Palm Court Hotel for an evening of presentations about 'North Sea Diving – Why, Who, When and How' organised by committee member Mark Grove-Smith of TotalEnergies. We had two speakers during the event, firstly Jim Creighton of TotalEnergies who gave a great overview of North Sea diving operations today including techniques, hazards and typical activities. Our second speaker was Garson Miller, a diving consultant, who spoke about the intricacies of how dive teams work together. Thank you to all involved for another informative evening.

Our next event was the very popular quiz night, held on Thursday 12th October. We returned to the Ashvale Restaurant, with a fish supper served to everyone before the serious business kicked off. An incredible 20 teams battled it out, with much 'banter' as teams marked each other's question papers.

No sudden death cliffhanger this year, but a new winning team emerged 'Tech-Neeps' clearly showing some connection between general knowledge retention and having a beard! The wooden spoon this year was taken home by one of the Kraken teams 'Fish and Ships', unlucky as it was a high scoring evening. Thanks again to Alan MacDonald for organising another fine social evening.

We returned to the Palm Court for another evening event on 22nd November, this time with the topic of 'Autonomous Survey and Inspection of Windfarms'. The evening certainly brought in a crowd with over 70 people attending the event. It was a busy night with Daniel Esser of Subsea Europe Services presenting first along with Dave Currie of RTS. Our second presentation was the hydrographic equivalent of a barbers shop quartet, with Brook Rodger and Dave Rennie from Unique Group, Phil Strettle-Brown of Enshore and Michael King of Sulmara providing some examples of USV operations. The topic generated a lot of discussion, our presenters being grilled until closing time!

On November 30th, we again co-hosted our annual joint industry event with the SUT and IMCA. Held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Aberdeen, the one-day event entitled 'Can Offshore Operations be Environmentally Sustainable?' opened with a keynote from Ross Dornan of OEUK followed by four sessions focused on electrification, environmental protection, robotics and optimisation & remote operations. The event was well attended and generated some interesting panel discussions with positive feedback received from presenters and delegates. We look forward to the next event and thank the SUT and IMCA for working with us again to bring this event to our joint networks.

Our 2024 evening meetings and events are being planned as we speak, and more information will be forthcoming soon.

THS:UKI Scotland Branch intend to continue to run the live events that were held last year, in the same format as last year. THS:UKI Scotland Branch has a dedicated committee of volunteers who's energy and enthusiasm will ensure that 2024 is a great success. We are again living in interesting and challenging times



and as ever, we are always better together. I'd like to personally thank all our committee members for their dedication and effort in 2023, and thanks to Nicki Nichols our deputy Chair for her efforts in 2023 and for keeping me heading in the right direction.

#### South West – James Williams, Chair

To be inserted before wide circulation.

#### Southern – notes provided by Mark Poole, Chair

The Southern Branch have maintained the strategy of delivering events at different venues across the region to afford regional members the opportunity to attend face to face events. Over the last twelve months the regional committee organised 5 technical meetings and promoted relevant events organised by the RIN to members. We started in February at the RICS in London for our annual joint meeting and moved East to the University of East London in March. May's meeting was at Solent University in Southampton and June saw us messing about on boats in the New Forest. Our regular meeting during MATS week in November was back in Southampton and we were back at the RICS last month. We are very grateful for the support from the RICS, NOC and corporate members that has enabled us to continue to make these events accessible to all and it was great to welcome 9 students at our last event, four of whom we sponsored to travel up from Southampton.

We are organising a regional barbecue that will be hosted by Sonardyne on 12th June and always welcome your suggestions for future events and venues.

Having lost 6 out of 14 committee members over the last 12 months we are actively recruiting so if you would like to play an active role in supporting the society please get in touch.

#### North-West – Chris Almond

Chris reported that the North-West region have now established a committee and have had a social event so far. Plans afoot for further socials plus presentation/speaker evenings.

#### Education Committee - Cassandra Nanlal

Unfortunately, last minute Cassandra Nanlal (Educational Committee Chair) was unable to make meeting. Trish Buxton therefore provided a summary of the presentation provided to the Board before the AGM. In accordance with THSUK objectives, the Education Committee held a strategic planning meeting for objectives going forward. The key areas of focus were University and Industry, Schools Outreach, Empowering Women in Hydrography and CPD/HPAS.

A note that we have a CPD form available.

#### International Federation of Hydrographic Societies

Gordon Johnson - To be inserted before wide circulation.

HPAS – William Heaps spoke about the importance of spreading the word for the scheme and getting more applicants through. William also included a overview summary of the recent intake.

6. Confirmation of Regional Directors

Confirmation of the following individuals as Regional Directors to take effect from the conclusion of the AGM in accordance with Article 16.4:

East Anglia : Trisha Buxton

Ireland : Seán Cullen

North West : Chris Almond

Scotland : Simon Canning

South West : David Parker

Southern : Mark Poole

International: Gordon Johnston

7. Election of the Honorary Secretary

Election of the Honorary Secretary by the Members in accordance with Article 16.13 to take effect from the conclusion of the AGM.

No nominations have been received. Position remains vacant and duties performed by board members.

8. Election of the Honorary Finance Director

Election of the Honorary Finance Director by the Members in accordance with Article 16.13 to take effect from the conclusion of the AGM.

Tom Broomfield was put forward during the 2023 and formally co-opted to the board shortly after during a board meeting. We therefore have received nominations for Tom to be re-elected to the board as Finance Director.

Show of hands for approval to elect Tom Broomfield? – Result = Elected.

9. Election of the Student and New Graduate Director

Election of the Student and New Graduate Director by the Members in accordance with Article 16.17 to take effect from the conclusion of the AGM

Ollly Fould has been nominated for this role.

Trish Buxton/John Dillon-Leetch said a few words about Ollly

Show of hands for approval to elect Ollly Foulds? – Result = Elected.

10. Election of TWO Elected Directors

Election of TWO Elected Directors by the Members in accordance with Article 16.9 to take effect from the conclusion of the AGM.

Nominations have been received for Liam Flood and Gordon Johnston.

Trish Buxton read out a bio for Liam Flood. Gordon was previously co-opted onto the Board and his nomination will see him remain on the Board as an elected director.

Result – Liam and Gordon voted in as elected directors

11. Address by the Chairman of The Hydrographic Society UK.

As you will have heard, THS UK remains to be busy either behind the scenes, nationally or within the branches. Becky has already covered all aspects of activity, so I only wish to remark on a few things.

We are extremely proud of Remote Hydrography – the team that made it happen and then event itself. It is a remarkable achievement.

In addition, I wanted to add that our activity on social media, mainly LinkedIn, has remained consistent and was extremely active during Remote Hydrography. I have been looking at the statistics and we can see how much we have grown in individuals following and how we are having a wide reach through the community.

I would like to express my thanks to both Becky and Derek for their hard work and determination over the year in addition to the Board members.

Lastly, I have been Chair since May 2020 so it is time for me to step down following this AGM and hand over to someone else. We will announce the new Chair from the Board soon.

12. Open discussion on topics raised by members.

James Williams asked for guidelines for committee roles. Acknowledgement provided by CEO that this item is on the list to be finalized and circulated.

Iain Slade asked about new THS:UKI Merchandise – can be used for events but also to sell. CEO confirmed that we are now looking into options for merchandise using the new branding.

Gordon Johnston asked is the board is complete. It was discussed that a second seat on the board representing education would be beneficial and is an action item to investigate.

13. Any other business.

With no further business, I would like to thank everyone for attending the meeting and for the continued support.

The next AGM will be in spring 2025.

Meeting Closed approx.: 1430