

The Northumbrian Pipers' Society ('Society')
(Company Number: 07471625)

Notice of Annual General Meeting

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the Society ('Meeting') will be held at **Warkworth Memorial Hall, 41 Castle Street, Warkworth, Northumberland NE65 0UN at 1.30 pm on Saturday 18 August 2018** to transact the following business:

Ordinary Business

- 1 To receive and approve the reports of the Chairman and the Chairman of the Cleveland Branch (see p 3 and p 8)
- 2 To receive and approve the Society's annual accounts for the financial year to 31 March 2018 (see p 10)
- 3 To re-appoint each member of the Committee subject to re-election and offering themselves to be re-elected for a further term, until the AGM of the Society in the year referred to against their name below:
 - 3.1 Andrew Davison
 - 3.2 Andy May
 - 3.3 Mike Evans
 - 3.4 Tom Fairfax
 - 3.5 Paul Knox
 - 3.6 Nick Leeming

or to elect and appoint any alternative or additional members of the Committee. No nominations have been received as at the date of this notice for any alternative or additional candidates but nominations may be made at the AGM, in which case a ballot will be held, to include those mentioned above.

- 4 To elect John Gibbons as Journal Editor
- 5 To enact any further business capable of being conducted at the meeting.

By order of the Committee
Susan Craven, Administrator
15 July 2018

Notes: Appointment of proxies

1. As a member of the Society, you are entitled to appoint a proxy to exercise all or any of your rights to attend, speak and vote at the Meeting and you should have received a proxy form with this notice of meeting. You can only appoint a proxy using the procedures set out in these notes and the notes to the proxy form.
2. A proxy does not need to be a member of the Society but must attend the Meeting to represent you. Details of how to appoint your proxy are set out in the notes on the proxy form. If you wish your proxy to speak on your behalf at the Meeting you will need to appoint your own choice of proxy (not the Chairman) and give your instructions directly to them.

Changing proxy instructions

1. To change your proxy instructions simply submit a new proxy appointment using the method set out in the proxy form. Note that the cut-off time for receipt of proxy appointments as stated in the proxy form also applies in relation to amended instructions; any amended proxy appointment received after the relevant cut-off time will be disregarded.
2. Where you have appointed a proxy using the hard-copy proxy form and would like to change the instructions using another hard copy proxy form, please contact the Secretary.

Termination of proxy appointments

1. In order to revoke a proxy instruction you will need to inform the Society by sending a signed hard copy notice clearly stating your intention to revoke your proxy appointment to the address stated in the proxy form. Any power of attorney or any other authority under which the revocation notice is signed (or a duly certified copy of such power or authority) must be included with the notice.
2. The revocation notice must be received by the Society no later than forty-eight hours before the time of the meeting (not taking account of any part of a day which is not a working day). If you attempt to revoke your proxy appointment but the revocation is received after the time specified then, subject to the paragraph directly below, your proxy appointment will remain valid.
Appointment of a proxy does not preclude you from attending the Meeting and voting in person. If you have appointed a proxy and attend the Meeting in person, your proxy appointment will automatically be terminated.

Appointment of Committee Members and other Officers

The maximum number of Committee members is 12. As the constitution permits Committee members to be nominated at any time up to the consideration of the resolution(s) to appoint the Committee, there may be nominations that are not listed in the notice of this meeting. If there are more nominations than positions available, the election will take place by ballot and the successful candidates will be those who have secured most votes (whether from members present in person or by proxy).

Item 1a

Chairman's Report 2018

Dear member

I write at a time when there is a real threat to our heritage through the Government's proposed ban on the sale or hiring of any item made of ivory – which is currently going through the Parliamentary process.

Along with your Committee, I am sure that most members will wholeheartedly support the principle behind the Government's actions. None of us will want to encourage the poaching of ivory or the killing of the majestic elephant. However, we do need to try to make sure that the solution does not have unintended consequences.

The Government did try to take account of concerns expressed by a number of musical instrument societies who responded to their consultation last autumn, by proposing two exemptions to the proposed ban. One was to allow the continued sale/hire of items over 100 years old and with special significance (as certified by a panel of experts). The other was to allow the continued sale/hire of musical instruments that did not include more than 20% ivory and were made before 1975.

Having spoken to several of our more active makers from the last few decades, I estimate that these exemptions will still not cover at least 500-600 sets of pipes currently in circulation. At a time when most new pipers are obtaining their pipes second hand due to the retirement of several of our most recognised makers, the loss of this number of pipes to the second hand market could be very significant. What seems particularly unfair is that all of these sets were entirely legal when made, as all the ivory used was either antique or lawfully imported with the relevant CITES licenses and there is a general principle that legislation should not have retrospective effect.

I am delighted by the support and extremely helpful advice that we are receiving from our President, Baroness Joyce Quin and also the effective intervention of MP for Berwick and mother of a young piper, Anne-Marie Trevelyan, who spoke on our behalf in the House of Commons when the Ivory Bill received its second and third readings, inviting the Minister to take account of the importance of the Northumbrian piping tradition and to look at extending the exemption to cover all Northumbrian pipes made before any ban takes effect. We are incredibly fortunate to have extremely good representation in both Houses of Parliament, so I am confident that our voice will be heard and hope that the Government agrees to allow all sets of pipes made before the ban takes effect to continue to be sold/hired.

We will keep you informed of developments.

New legislation has caused a lot of work for your Committee over the last year. In addition to the proposed ivory ban, we have also, like every other organisation, had to get our minds around the new GDPR requirements that came into force across Europe on 25 May 2018. This has meant agreeing new policies on data collection and storage and also seeking consent from everyone to the Society continuing to send out various types of communication. If you have not completed and returned the form enclosed with the last Newsletter, please do so as soon as possible, otherwise, we may no longer be able to keep you informed of what is going on. If you need a further copy of the consent form, please do contact Susan, our Administrator, on admin@northumbrianpipers.org.uk or call her on 01670 761872.

One quite serious consequence of the new regulations is that your Committee does not currently see a way in which we can realistically continue to print and circulate the Members' Handbook. Producing a document that contains every member's name, address and contact details is really difficult, not to mention problems around what to do when someone ceases to be a member. We will need to think about other ways to help members to get in touch with each other. All suggestions are welcomed.

I know it was a big step last year for the Society to start to pay someone to carry out our administration but I am delighted to say that Susan has made a real difference. Working freelance and part time, she has helped with the day-to-day accounting, the monthly events newsletter and a range of other tasks that Committee members simply have not had the time to do. One vital task she has been undertaking is a full review of our membership. It turned out that we have been sending newsletters etc to quite a lot of people who have not paid their subscriptions for three years or more. With Susan's help, we have been getting back in contact with these members and checking whether they wish to continue or not. The consequence of this and the GDPR exercises is that we will have fewer members on the list but at least we know the list is of genuine members who are keen to be part of the Society. As I write, the number of confirmed members is 647 (2017: 832). If you receive this and have not paid, please put in place a standing order to save us having to use the Society money to send out reminders.

I am sure that there will be those who believe that the Committee members should take responsibility for carrying out the tasks that Susan is doing for us. I agree – in a perfect world. However, everyone lives busy lives and the current Committee simply can not devote the time required to deliver everything needed. We are still looking for a new Secretary (Julia has very kindly been filling in on a temporary basis but we desperately need someone new to take over). And Richard has indicated that he can no longer continue with the Newsletter, so we are looking for a new Newsletter editor. I also know that Mike would be delighted if someone is willing to take on the role of Treasurer. If you have any time and would like to get involved, please do let us know. It does not have to be

a large job. As the old saying goes, “many hands make light work!” A huge “Thank You” to John Gibbons for agreeing to take on the role of Journal Editor. We are all really looking forward to seeing his first publication. If you have any contributions, please feed them through to him at journal@northumbrianpipers.org.uk

Your Committee has continued to look for ways to raise the profile of the pipes and of piping over the last year. Members will recall my “rant” about how our traditions are overlooked in our own region and how we are missing out on the value that Scotland, Wales and Ireland gain by respecting and supporting their traditions. Ireland have even sought and secured UNESCO recognition for their piping tradition! A recent example of the challenge we face is the video to promote the Great Exhibition of the North, which takes place in Newcastle and Gateshead over the summer. The only pipes shown are Scottish!!! There is so much more to be done! To help, your Committee is discussing bringing in some professional public relations support, with a view to increasing the number of pictures and stories about the pipes, piping and our music that get into the local press and on the radio/TV. Again, if there is a volunteer who would be interesting in taking on this role, instead of the Society paying for the help, please do get in touch. We would love to hear from you. We are also really keen to continue finding things we can do to help support pipers all round the world, so if you are a video camera enthusiast and would like to help produce videos of things like maintenance, making, fettling – or anything else – please let us know. We would love to support you in getting more materials available.

On a more positive note (sorry!) I was immensely proud to attend the 50th anniversary ceremony to commemorate the award of an Honorary Doctorate to Martin Luther King by Newcastle University. The ceremony took place in the Kings Hall of the University, a wonderful oak panelled room (which has some less pleasant memories, as this is where I sat all my Degree examinations!). The Hall had just been refurbished and a brand new chamber organ had been installed, at great expense. When the time came for the procession of dignitaries to start the ceremony, instead of walking in to the sound of this great organ, we were treated to the sound of the pipes, wonderfully played by Keith Davidson, dressed in his plaid, leading the procession into the Hall. After the ceremony, Keith played everyone out again. Well done Keith – and well done Newcastle University for recognising the value of our heritage on such occasions.

It is important that we recognise our supporters; not only the University but also others who use their positions to promote our traditions. During the year, for example, the Northumberland National Park appointed Paul Knox as their official piper and asked him to play at the opening of the major new visitor centre up on the Roman Wall; the new High Sheriff for Northumberland has appointed young piper Izzy Maxwell as his official piper and I was immensely honoured to be asked by the Duke and Duchess of Northumberland to play at the wedding of their son, which took place in the chapel of a beautiful Bavarian castle – a truly memorable occasion.

We must not let these highlights overshadow the continued vital day-to-day business of the Society, including the wonderful dedicated contributions from several Committee members and others. Notable contributions include:

- Julia has kept the shop going, providing a fantastic service to anyone wanting to buy our books etc.
- Mark has kept our website running and has been helping with the technical side of our accounting software.
- Mike has kept our accounts up to date, produced our annual accounts for filing with Companies House and with the Charities Commission and also making sure that everyone gets paid, which has involved trying to battle with the banking system to allow us to make electronic payments.
- Nick has done a fantastic job with the pipes hire system. The hire of traditional sets continues with between 40 and 50 sets out at any one time. While it has to be said that many hirers give up, it is heartening when sets are returned because the hirer has bought their own set. This has happened several times in the past few months. Another success is when a young hirer moves up from an unkeyed set to a keyed set. The Society has several sets made for children. These have small bags and tiny bellows. Recently when one youngster was presented with a full-sized 7-key set, she strapped them on, and within seconds was grinning happily, playing and absolutely delighted to have a full-sized set of bellows that needed much less pumping than the tiny bellows she was used to.
- Andy organised another brilliant concert in the autumn and has also kept the monthly Saturday gatherings going with the help of a string of volunteers.
- Tom has been focused on trying to improve our work with young pipers:
 - The Northumbrian Ranters are playing their annual concert at the 1000th anniversary of the Battle of Carham - the battle that set the Scottish border where it is today.
 - As mentioned above, The High Sheriff of Northumberland, Michael Orde, has this year, appointed an official Piper, Izzy Maxwell, one of the young pipers from YPG4Tips.
 - A strong team of Northumbrian Pipers from NPS, Alnwick Pipers Society and the Spittal Pipers, went to Wooler on 7th June to support the Glendale Agricultural Society's Children's day. The purpose of this day is to introduce young children (mainly around 8 years old) from around the region to the countryside, its industry and its culture. As always, it was an amazing event - and whilst there are a range of levels of interest from different children, the day for me was made by the small number whose faces light up when they hear this incredible instrument. I am confident that some of the seeds we have planted may grow in the future...

- We continue to use our sets of plastic schools pipes, with two sets in schools in Hexham and Ashington respectively. The remaining NPS sets are fit and are deployed periodically on an event basis but could equally be provided for use in schools if anyone has a need for them?
- Paul has taken on the Pipes Purchase scheme to help people move from hire sets to owning their own pipes.
- We also welcomed Andy Lawrenson and Alice Robinson onto the Committee at the AGM, both of whom are finding their feet well and making great contributions.
- Despite not being Committee members, Ann Sessoms has volunteered to keep our Committee minutes and produce the agendas, as well as organising the annual competitions, Gill Lyons has provided some helpful advice during the last year of her co-option onto the Committee, Richard Heard has been doing some great work on our archives with help from others, including Julia and Louise Woodman (for example, in seeking a Heritage Lottery Fund grant to help us to digitise the Forster Charlton tapes) and Mike Nelson has done some truly brilliant work in continuing to develop the designs for the second generation of “schools” or “plastic” pipes. If anyone runs a CNC engineering business and thinks they may be able to help with the manufacture of these pipes, please do get in touch with me.

I am immensely grateful to them all, and to everyone else around the different piping groups who help to keep our music alive and our traditions thriving all around the world.

As we approach the AGM, it is sadly time to say thank you to those who are stepping down from the Committee. I would again like to thank Gill for her support as a co-opted member and Richard for all the fantastic work he has done as our newsletter editor. Thankfully, Richard has offered to continue editing the Newsletter despite stepping down from the Committee, at least for a short while, to give us a chance to find his successor. Please do let us know if you are interested in finding out more about what this involves.

Thank you again to all my wonderful colleagues on the Committee and to everyone who contributes to the publications, who takes their pipes out to play them in public and who helps to spread our traditions.

A huge thank you to Baroness Joyce Quin, who is such a support to me as Chairman and who takes every opportunity to use her position to help the Society and its cause.

And finally, it was an enormous honour (and surprise!) to have been awarded an OBE in the Birthday Honours List. I really do see this as a tribute to all the work that so many of you do around the world to promote our wonderful instrument and its music, far more than anything I have done personally. I will certainly be thinking of you all when I go to the

Palace later in the year to receive it formally. My sincere thanks to everyone who has sent me such lovely messages of congratulations and support.

Keep piping!

Andrew Davison, OBE
Chairman

Cleveland Branch Chairman's Report June 2018

The past year has been rather mixed one for the Cleveland Branch. We sadly lost our former Hon Treasurer, Ron Fairbairn, whose obituary was reported in the NPS Newsletter, in May 2017. Margaret Moyes, our Chairman decided to stand down after over 11 years in post, and the branch elected a new Chair at the Branch AGM in June 2017. Also, our Hon Treasurer for many years, Anne Gale, decided to stand down and Brian Fisher was subsequently elected as Branch Hon Treasurer. The Branch thanked both Margaret and Anne for their many years of service.

Both the Chair and Hon Treasurer have had to take on additional roles due to the lack of members willing to stand for election as Branch officers, though we were pleased to elect a new committee member.

The numbers attending our meetings at Ceddesfeld Hall continue to hold up, though many new members from the last few years are no longer attending. We are pleased to see many long-standing members continuing to attend, though and we continue to welcome anyone who is interested in listening to the pipes and the music. Meetings are always convivial with good piping and a friendly atmosphere.

I have continued to keep a list of tunes played at meetings. This year "Friendly Visit" is again the most popular tune, followed by "Low Lights of Shields", then "Whinham's Reel" and "Whinshiels Hornpipe". "The Old Drove Road" is still the most popular tune of all time (well, since 2000). Tunes played for the first time this year include "Anton's Muneira", "Barrowburn Reel", "Cammie's Tune", "Hunter Hill", "Melody", and "Over the Hills and Far Away".

The Branch's playing group continues to promote the pipes to the public. However we could still do with more pipers in the group to cover all the playing opportunities that are available. We were very honoured to be asked by The High Sheriff of Durham 2017/18, to play at two public and at one private event during her year of office. We have continued to perform also for charity at NGS Open Gardens. The playing group's repertoire continues to grow with the added variety provided by duets from Brian Fisher and Tim Jones and the

accompaniment of Jo Jones' guitar. Brian has updated (and expanded) the group's tune book.

"Piping for Prizes" was held during our October meeting. The three cups and three shields were distributed fairly so that almost every participant went home with a trophy. Thanks to Anthony Robb for his judging and kind words.

Finally I would like to thank Brian Fisher for maintaining our hire sets in good order, introducing our public performances, and for all his work in producing our Tune Book in addition to his duties as Hon Treasurer, the rest of the committee, and all our members for their continued support.

David Cook, June 2018.

Item 2 Accounts of the Society to 31 March 2018

These will be available one month before the AGM on the NPS website www.northumbrianpipers.org.uk or on request from the Treasurer, Mike Evans at treasurer@northumbrianpipers.org.uk

Item 3 To re-appoint each member of the Committee subject to re-election and offering themselves to be re-elected for a further term, until the AGM of the Society in the year referred to against their name below:

Item 4 To elect John Gibbons as Journal Editor

Item 5 To carry out any other business capable of being conducted at the meeting

**The Northumbrian Pipers' Society
Annual General Meeting 2018**

Proxy Form – please detach and return once completed (see note 5 overleaf)

Before completing this form, please read the explanatory note overleaf

I / We (print name)

.....
being a / member/s of the Society appoint the Chairman of the meeting or (see note 3)

as my/our proxy to attend, speak and vote on my/our behalf at the Annual General Meeting of the Society to be held on 18 August 2018 at 1.30 pm and at any adjournment of the meeting.

I/We direct my/our proxy to vote on the following resolutions as I/we have indicated by marking the appropriate box with an 'X'. If no indication is given, my/our proxy will vote or abstain from voting at his or her discretion and I/we authorise my/our proxy to vote (or abstain from voting) as he or she thinks fit in relation to any other matter or resolution which is properly put before the meeting.

	Resolutions	For	Against
1	To receive and approve the reports of the Chairman and the Chairman of the Cleveland Branch.		
2	To receive and approve the Society's annual accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2018.		
3	To re-appoint each member of the Committee subject to re-election and offering themselves to be re-elected: 3.1 Andrew Davison 3.2 Andy May 3.3 Mike Evans 3.4 Tom Fairfax 3.5 Paul Knox 3.6 Nick Leeming 3.7		
4	To elect John Gibbons as Journal Editor		
	<u>Signature</u>	Date	

Notes:

1. As a member of the Society, you are entitled to appoint a proxy to exercise all or any of your rights to attend, speak and vote at a general meeting of the Society. You can only appoint a proxy using the procedures set out in these notes and the Notice of the meeting.
2. Appointment of a proxy does not preclude you from attending the meeting and voting in person. If you have appointed a proxy and attend the meeting in person, your proxy appointment will automatically be terminated.
3. A proxy does not need to be a member of the Society but must attend the meeting to represent you. To appoint as your proxy a person other than the Chairman of the meeting, insert their full name in the box. If you sign and return this proxy form with no name inserted in the box, the Chairman of the meeting will be deemed to be your proxy. Where you appoint as your proxy someone other than the Chairman, you are responsible for ensuring that they attend the meeting and are aware of your voting intentions. If you wish your proxy to make any comments on your behalf, you will need to appoint someone other than the Chairman and give them the relevant instructions directly.
4. To direct your proxy how to vote on the resolutions, mark the appropriate box with an 'X'. If no voting indication is given, your proxy will vote or abstain from voting at his or her discretion. Your proxy will vote (or abstain from voting) as he or she thinks fit in relation to any other matter which is put before the meeting.
5. To appoint a proxy using this form, the form must be:
 - 5.1 completed and signed;
 - 5.2 sent or delivered to the NPS Administrator at Sandpipers, North Broomhill, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE65 9UL, UK; and
 - 5.3 received by the Society no later than **Monday 13 August 2018**.
6. Any power of attorney or any other authority under which this proxy form is signed (or a duly certified copy of such power of authority) must be included with the proxy form.
7. As an alternative to completing this hard copy proxy form, you can appoint a proxy electronically by sending an email to agm-voting@northumbrianpipers.org.uk. For an electronic proxy appointment to be valid, your appointment must be received by the Society no later than **12 noon on Monday 13 August 2018**.
8. If you submit more than one valid proxy appointment, the appointment received last before the latest time for the receipt of proxies will take precedence.
9. For details of how to change your proxy instructions or revoke your proxy appointment see the notes to the notice of meeting.

You may not use any electronic address provided in this proxy form to communicate with the Society for any purposes concerning this meeting other than those expressly stated