



Fellowship

**8th Fellowship Council Meeting Summary**

Wednesday 21 September 2011, 13.30-16.30  
RSA, 8 John Adam Street, London, WC2N 6EZ

FCMtg21Sept11Summary

**Convenors:**

Robert Porrer (Chair)  
Irene Campbell (Deputy Chair)

<p><b>Present:</b> Andy Gibson Ann Packard Bill Gibbon Charles Millar Clive Harries David Archer David Clarke Frances Gallagher Gerard Darby Gerry Acher Jackie Elliman Jemima Gibbons John Elliott John McMullan Julia Goodfellow-Smith Keith Horsfall Kevin Cahill Marion Simon Max Comfort Rosie Ferguson Ruth Jindal Tony Colton Tony Hoskins Wiard Sterk Zena Martin</p>	<p><b>Apologies:</b> Charmian Love David Dickinson Nicholas Clifford Patricia Samuel Paul Buchanan Sybil Crouch Tessy Britton</p> <p><b>RSA Staff present:</b> Matthew Taylor, Chief Executive Adam Lent, Director of Programme Michael Ambjorn, Head of Fellowship Networks Josef Lentsch, Head of Fellowship Services Katy Evans, PA to Director of Programme Samantha Fletcher, Deputy Head of Fellowship Services – Retention, Information &amp; Support Matthew Mezey, Senior Networks Manager - Online &amp; International (part) Julian Thompson, Director of Enterprise (part)</p> <p><b>In attendance (item 3 only):</b> Andrew Summers, Chair of RSA House Development Committee Matthew Bates, Director of RSA House Matthew Lloyd, Architect</p>
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**Live blog of meeting is available via:**

<http://www.monkeyswithtypewriters.co.uk/tag/rsafellowshipcouncil>

## **Welcome and introduction from FC Chair, including introduction of new FC members**

Chair Bob Porrer welcomed everyone to the meeting, including the following new Council members:

- Ruth Jindal (East Midlands)
- Tony Colton (East Midlands)
- Patricia Samuel (London) – *unable to attend*
- Bill Gibbon (North East)
- Max Comfort (West)
- Julia Goodfellow-Smith (West Midlands)
- Keith Horsfall (West Midlands)
- Clive Harries (Yorkshire)
- Marion Simon (Yorkshire)

### **1. Apologies**

Noted as above.

#### **Live-Blogging**

Council member Jemima Gibbons would be live blogging the meeting at:

<http://www.monkeyswithtypewriters.co.uk/tag/rsafellowshipcouncil>

### **2. Summary of 7<sup>th</sup> Meeting held on 19 April 2011**

No comments received regarding the summary of the last meeting. No further amendments raised; the minutes of the last meeting were **APPROVED**.

### **3. Development of the RSA House**

Andrew Summers, Chair of RSA House Development Committee, Matthew Bates, Director of RSA House and Matthew Lloyd, Architect gave a presentation on the plans for the development of RSA House. FC members David Archer and Andy Gibson are also members of RSA House Development Committee.

A former trustee of six years, Andrew Summers now chairs the RSA House Development Committee. The use of the House and how it is used and developed has been discussed by the Committee. The four main objectives are:

1. How to improve the use of space.
2. To communicate better what the RSA does.
3. To make it more interactive with the rest of the country and the world; a centre of a network.
4. To improve the RSA's revenue stream.

Development to start with the Great Room and the ground floor; the initial contact visitors have with the House. Three main groups have been considered whilst developing plans:

1. Fellows here and throughout the country and world.
2. Visitors to events, lectures etc.
3. Hirers.

## **The Brief**

Matthew Lloyd, Architect, explained that the project had started with a brief to look at the Great Room (built 1774) which has changed over the years; from an occasional exhibition room to use more as a lecture theatre. The brief was to look at the building with a view to making it more usable / flexible.

RSA House is a building of various styles / finishes which seems to have lost the Adam architecture to a large extent. It has different signage and is a difficult building to find your way around.

In preparation, floors have been opened up to discover the history of the building, to see what can be kept. A glass mosaic floor found in the main hall will be restored. A paint analysis will be done to discover old colours used. There will be no changes externally.

## **The Plan**

The aim is to make the building more modern without losing the original architecture. The Great stairs to be restored and the aim is to commission a new chandelier running down the stairs. The raised seating in the Great Room is to be removed to create a flat floor; allowing more flexibility in use for not only lectures but dinners, exhibitions, gallery space too. There will be acoustic treatment to a new timber floor. The building is currently air conditioned from under the seating; this will change to come in via the ceiling. The Barry paintings are undervalued due to the current arrangement, but will be appreciated more under the new format.

There will be a contemporary reception arrangement with a small reception desk (receptionist standing) that can be moved away. An interactive screen for information is also a possibility. There will be a new cloakroom that can also be used as a servery for certain events. The route to the Gerard Bar will be redecorated and relit.

The wheelchair access will not change, but a corridor will be introduced and the current space will become a meeting room. The Tavern Room will be opened up with the adjoining space. It was noted that the Adam buildings were originally houses and we are mindful to retain that sense of history. There will be two new meeting rooms; a new bookable meeting room for Fellows which is currently a chair store.

The Accounts office on the top floor will become a plant room to allow for air conditioning changes.

In the Great Room it is proposed there is a stage that drops down. There will not be a better set of sight lines; the speaker will be raised via the drop down stage. There is the possibility of more than one screen for live streaming.

Andrew Summers summarised this is the first stage of development to give an idea of the plans that have been agreed in principle by the Trustee Board. The estimated cost is £2.9M and plans are currently out to tender. Refurbishment is proposed to start in December and be complete by June 2012 in time for the 2012 Olympics. The Barry paintings feature Olympian athletes so have fitting links. The hope in the development is for flexibility to meet different audience requirements and flexibility of spaces. There will be three new meeting spaces on the ground floor. He posed three questions:

1. What opportunities do these plans provide to involve fellows more strongly with the RSA and how do we encourage this? (e.g. video links to lectures, new projects, communication from video wall, use of meeting spaces)
2. How do we develop a system for availability of rooms for fellows' activities? (e.g. use of Great Room once a month, new "Fellows" Room)
3. Other suggestions/requirements which we should take into account as the plan develops?

**Question:** Can you confirm that the noise of the overhead air conditioning will not be intrusive? Is there any archive material that could assist with colour choices?

**Answer:** The noisy air conditioning in the Benjamin Franklin Room is to be replaced. In the Great Room the circulation system of heating and cooling will come from above. When the Great Room is full of people there may be air noise, but the room can be prepped to minimise the noise. An induction loop will be fitted in the Great Room. It is quite difficult in a Grade I listed building to install absolutely silent air conditioning. With reference to the debate on colours, a colour investigation specialist has been commissioned. It is not clear at this stage whether there will be a historic or modern approach to colour.

**Question:** The one art that seems to have been omitted is music. Can we use the Great Room for concerts?

**Answer:** The Great Room is being acoustically engineered.

**Question:** Why not have retractable seating rather than a flat floor?

**Answer:** The plans have allowed for flexibility of use of space. We are trying to generate more debate, live streaming.

**Comments:** Could I urge the House Development Committee to consider changes to foster greater Fellowship engagement? It seems development of the House should be put into local network hubs throughout the country, a place Fellows can go in the sticks; a place / location that Fellows can have access to 2 – 3 days per week to provide a social cement at a local level. I feel it should be within your remit to consider these hubs.

Andrew Summers advised that the Committee was only dealing with the House at present.

Matthew Taylor advised that hubs had been closed a few years ago because they proved to be expensive and not always accessible to everyone in a region. We now try to establish partnerships with regard to regular use of a facility.

**ACTION:** Andrew Summers to log idea of local hubs and take forward for discussion for phase 2.

**Question:** Thank you for an inspiring presentation. I believe the RSA has a collection of artworks; can we re-hang some of these? Also incorporate with all the new technology?

**Answer:** We would like communication in the RSA to around the activity of the work of the RSA and its Fellows.

**Comments:** I'm not clear on restoration and the lighting effect on the Barry paintings so they can be seen at their best.

The paintings are not being restored. They will not be removed, but will be protected during the works; this has been approved by our insurers. They will not be specifically lit because of their age.

**Comments:** The Gerard Bar seems to have been missed out of the plans.

Matthew Bates advised of the need to be flexible on the catering approach and offer around the House. He is currently looking at pop-up solutions to meet demand when required, but a new restaurant cannot be created. Phase 2 of development will include the Gerard Bar.

**Comments:** The Committee was congratulated on the new designs. Taking into account what a modern space looks like, how the world has changed so much in past ten years will reflect the spaces that will come on stream in the next ten years. We are trying to create an image of the future; don't clutter with old masters.

**Question:** It is an exciting project. Do you automatically do an impact assessment, especially in relation to the reception area and staff standing (wheelchair users will be looked down upon)?

**Answer:** Matthew Bates advised the DSA entrance will be the main reception for events. The focus will be on interaction with Fellows as they enter. The reception will be disability friendly and the overall plan improves disabled access across the building.

**Question:** Who has done the Access Audit?

**Answer:** An audit has not been done. Professional architects take this into account when drawing up plans.

**Comments:** This should be looked at. It is important that the building is accessible.

**ACTION:** The constraints of English Heritage and Westminster were raised. Matthew Lloyd to talk to the RSA about commissioning an access audit.

**Comments:** It would be useful to have a room to enhance the regional experience.

Matthew Taylor stated that it is proposed that the Great Room be made available to Fellows once per month. A mechanism to choose which regional events are selected is required.

Bob Porrer thanked Andrew Summers for the presentation.

**ACTION:** Email any further comments to Matthew Bates ([matthew.bates@rsa.org.uk](mailto:matthew.bates@rsa.org.uk))

#### 4. **Matters Arising:**

##### **RSA Wales/Cymru**

Proposals from the group established at the Fellows' meeting in Cardiff in November 2010 have been circulated to all Fellows in Wales and a meeting open to all Fellows in Wales will be held on 22 October. Fellows will be invited to discuss and vote on the proposals with the aim of establishing the new structure for RSA Wales/Cymru.

**Comments:** It has taken two years to convene this meeting. Will there be a similar meeting for the West region?

Bob Porrer stated it had taken a year from the first meeting in Cardiff, but progress had been slow in moving to the point where a new structure could be proposed for RSA Wales/Cymru.

Michael Ambjorn advised a range of meetings had taken place in the West Region and there will be a panel meeting tomorrow (23/09/11) should anyone wish to attend.

### **Governance Advisory Group**

The GAG's proposals will be considered at the October AGM. If the proposals are approved, the implementation of changes will take place in summer 2012.

As a related issue, a couple of areas (not governance issues) which emerged from the Fellowship Council's Review of "Regions" are already being taken forward, while there was one major issue - resourcing for the regions/nations -that needed action. A recommendation that non-governance issues in the FC's draft Review of Regions be taken forward following the October AGM by the Chair and Deputy Chair, with specific operational issues to be discussed with the Fellowship Department and the recommendation *"that the Trustee Board should establish a small group, to include the Chair of the Fellowship Council and one other FC member, to review resourcing of activities within the regions, whether in terms of money allocated to regions, staff or central infrastructure support"* to be actioned.

The recommendation above was **AGREED** by FC members.

### **Pilot Survey of Fellowship**

Josef Lentsch had circulated the full results of the survey. He outlined the plans for a Fellowship wide survey to be conducted in December 2011 covering the whole of the Fellowship including international members. A high response is expected based on the 27% return rate of the pilot survey.

Josef Lentsch asked the FC what questions they would be interested in having included.

#### **ACTION:**

- Josef Lentsch to contact FC members in due course with information on survey content.
- Keith Horsfall to forward Josef Lentsch details of the West Midlands membership survey conducted last year.
- Any ideas and suggestions regarding the survey to be sent to [josef.lentsch@rsa.org.uk](mailto:josef.lentsch@rsa.org.uk)

### **Visit to RSA Academy**

Logistics have proved difficult; as a result, no date has been organised. Arrangements for the RSA Academy visit will be made over the next few months.

**Comments:** The official opening of the Academy's performing arts centre will take place on 7<sup>th</sup> October; invitation extended to FC members.

### **Website development**

Josef Lentsch gave a brief presentation (see attached) on progress on the development of the website which is not yet complete. The revamped website launched in June 2011. Page views increased from 40,000 page views a month in 2009 to an average 120,000 in May 2010. This was mainly attributed to RSA Animate, which is also very prominent on the new website. Since the website relaunch of the newly structured Fellowship website in Q2 we now get 5 times as many unique visitors to the regional/national pages. In the past an average of one person per month was downloading and sending in an application form, now it is around 30, so there was a much improved "conversion" rate. The 'Becoming an RSA Fellow' application form has been revamped to make it clearer and more accessible. The Fellowship Charter is embedded within the form.

The 'word cloud' in the presentation represents a wordle graphic of the most popular words in 15 recent fellows applications, key words are work, social, education, support and community. It is useful see what Fellows are interested in from the outset.

**Question:** One of the barriers to engagement is we don't know what Fellows are interested in. Is there any mileage in the survey asking existing Fellows what they're interested in?

**Answer:** Josef Lentsch advised that the new system should provide much better data on the interests of Fellows. They are also planning exit surveys to improve service provision.

**Comment:** Arts is a tiny word in the corner, but I can't see manufacturing or commerce.

Josef Lentsch advised this word cloud only represented a very small sample of applications.

Josef outlined the next steps. By end of 2011 it is hoped to submit to Trustees our choice for a preferred platform supplier. In Q1 2012 the annual survey results should be received, with platform development in Q1 and Q2 2012 and launch of the platform in Q3 2012.

**Comment:**

- From the RSA Home Page it takes 9 steps to get to a region. Regional entries are out of date and regions are not allowed to update their regional information which should be properly displayed and up to date.
- The Royal Charter is not mentioned on the first 8 pages of the website and there is a problem finding it; it needs to be brought to the top.

Josef Lentsch advised that the evidence contradicts that the regional pages were buried as they were now receiving five times as many page views as before.

**Comment:** That's fine, but can we improve?

Bob Porrer stated that we have taken a big step forward now we have a central diary but highlighted the need to populate it and the regional/national pages with events information.

**Question:** Can a report be made available to let regions know how many visitors there are to their respective regional pages?

**Answer:** It is difficult to distinguish non-Fellows from Fellows, but we are trying to overcome these technical issues and expect to be able to provide this data.

**Question:** Could there be an alphabetical list of events to help find events? Can you update the map / calendar facility?

**Answer:** Michael Ambjorn advised there are ways to navigate in via the map. A paper had been sent out to the last meeting of regional chairs and we will be revisiting that. We are here to help and support so please send information through so we can populate the website.

Josef Lentsch advised that it was hoped to replace the Fellows Directory with a new system, but transferring existing data. They will be making recommendations to the Trustees in the next couple of weeks. If work starts at the end of this year it is hoped it will be complete by June 2012.

**Question:** Can we just have an update on how people use the Nings? Is anyone finding them useful and if you're not using them, why not?

**Comment:**

- We use the Yorkshire Ning. It would be helpful to link regional Ning sites so we can see what is happening in other regions.
- I forget it exists; it may be useful to have a daily reminder as in Facebook.
- Ning was sold this morning for \$150M so things may change.

**ACTION:** Ensure information is sent to the Fellowship team for inclusion on the website to keep it comprehensive and up to date.

*It was noted this topic would be discussed at the next regional/national chairs meeting 07/11/11.*

## 5. Supporting the Engagement of Fellows

Irene Campbell reported the group had only managed to meet earlier in the day. Three areas had been covered during the meeting:

1. How we could contribute to local engagement.
2. How we could engage across the whole of the RSA.
3. How are we going to do it?

The question of how do / can we add value was raised, as was how people are engaged.

The role of the FC was raised. Some FC members think their role is to represent Fellows in their region/nation while others think their role is to support the Fellowship and Projects as per the statement on the website: *"The Fellowship Council represents the interests of the Fellowship, helps Fellows to collaborate with the RSA in the development of projects and activities, and works to ensure that Fellows' projects align with the charitable aims of the Society"*.

Irene Campbell advised local engagement was the only aspect covered at the meeting due to the time available. The place of the FC in relation to the regions was discussed. It was noted FC member and regional chair were different roles although some people held both roles. We have to work together in the regions to decide what individual roles we all have.

Matthew Taylor stated that if the GAG resolution passes we will be able to start to make genuine comparisons between the regions which at the moment we cannot do. There will be comparative data on recruitment and retention and we will be able to chart regional and national performance. We will know what each region / nation has achieved against its agreed objectives. It will strengthen the link between the centre and the regions and nations. There will be a relationship of challenge and support if the recommendations are passed.

Irene Campbell declared that she thought all FC members can have several roles, but the key issue is what are we going to do to engage the individual Fellow, while recognising that not every Fellow wants to engage. The question is how FC representatives can facilitate a range of choices for Fellows within each region/nation.

**Comment:** The London committee just did a survey and a lot of the responses were 'what London committee?'

Irene Campbell suggested we provide many action channels and increase awareness. What capacity does FC have to give? Should we have surgeries, workshops, panels etc. This is all still up for discussion.

**ACTION:** The next meeting on engaging Fellows will take place before the AGM on 05/10/11 at 1600. Contact Irene Campbell if you would like to attend: [irene.campbell@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:irene.campbell@eastsussex.gov.uk)

**Comment:** Engagement of the RSA with Fellows could offer a valuable resource / opportunity structure for the organisation. The organisation needs to develop more sophisticated ways of tracking resources. The Skills Bank is rather static.

Irene Campbell thought the Fellowship Directory addressed the above and expressed wariness of creating many different ways of doing this.

Michael Ambjorn advised that the Skills Bank is used for matching those that want to contribute and what they are able to contribute. Catalyst bids are also a useful source of information. In a more informal way, Fellows are welcome to contact the RSA to request connection with Fellows who share their interests.

Irene Campbell suggested FC members could ring a couple of new Fellows each month.

**Comment:** Contacting via Skype would make communication / contact easier.

**ACTION:** Contact Jemima Gibbons [jemimag@gmail.com](mailto:jemimag@gmail.com) if you would like the Skype contact list.

Michael Ambjorn noted FC profiles are available on the website which advise how members can be contacted. Skype can be revisited.

**ACTION:** During the break, visit the contact pictures / descriptions on the table and add Skype name and any contact details you wish to share. Alternatively, email any additions to Michael Ambjorn [michael.ambjorn@rsa.org.uk](mailto:michael.ambjorn@rsa.org.uk) / Katy Evans [katy.evans@rsa.org.uk](mailto:katy.evans@rsa.org.uk) so the website can be updated.

**Comment:** It was suggested a camera be brought to the next FC meeting so photos of all FC members could be taken.

*Break*

## 6. RSA Projects

Adam Lent, Director of Programme responsible for both the Projects and Fellowship departments, gave a brief update on RSA Projects. Recent reports were available at the back of the room for FC members to take away and all are available on the website: <http://www.thersa.org/projects>.

The RSA Family of Schools is starting to develop. The team are actively encouraging schools to become academies. There are already two academies and a third will hopefully join the Family shortly.

The Peterborough project which fosters civic engagement and activism has been operating for a year and has taken time to embed in the locality. The project is now half way through and we are really starting to see the Council interested in learning the lessons we have discovered in Peterborough.

The drug recovery project is small scale but has rapidly become influential and we are being approached by significant organisations wanting to work with us.

Design is historically a very important area for the RSA. Work to understand the ways design skills can be used by people with spinal cord injuries to redesign their own environment has been successful at Stoke Mandeville and is expanding.

The enterprise strand is looking to do more work on commerce and a variety of different projects are being worked on at present.

Adam Lent advised he is focussing on raising the profile of the work we do with Fellows and the wider population of the UK and the world. He is also focussing on finding the most effective ways to engage Fellows in the work of Projects. The Projects Advisory Group has reformed and met last month. Adam Lent stated in the next few months he would like the opportunity to come back and give a more detailed presentation on progress to the Fellowship Council.

**Comment:** It is vital to get information of what we're doing into the wider world at large.

Adam Lent responded that there is a challenging media environment in the UK; we cannot just produce a good report and expect the press to respond. The RSA has done a good job in securing media attention, but what is needed is more than just good PR, but also showing people we have expertise.

**Question:** How does a project become a project? Is there a link to Catalyst?

**Answer:** In a variety of ways: from Fellows' ideas; Projects' staff ideas. We need to ensure we are using the most innovative ways for Fellows to make an input into projects. Fellowship views expertise and skills as a valuable resource.

**Comment:** There needs to be a way of communicating projects and engaging Fellows up front.

Adam Lent advised there was an issue of Projects' staff juggling a wide variety of tasks to get projects off the ground and we welcomed the support and expertise of Fellows.

**Comment:** On the development of the Opening Minds curriculum and how can this be further developed and tested in schools, it is worth bringing non-academies into the Opening Minds curriculum.

Matthew Taylor advised all the academies are Opening Minds practitioners.

## 7. Trustee Board Fellowship Strategy Delivery Group

A report had been circulated with the agenda. David Archer reported back from the Trustee Board with regard to looking at Fellowship recruitment and retention. The Trustees wanted reassurance that the new strategy of Fellows recruiting other Fellows (as opposed to mailshots) was working.

**Question:** Concern was expressed on the change of focus on getting new members. Is there any consideration on redressing the balance when bringing in new Fellows?

**Answer:**

- Josef Lentsch reported that they were producing a paper for the next Trustee Board. The survey will help to understand the dynamics of recruitment. Fellows were the primary source of new Fellows.
- Matthew Taylor stated we would look at collaborations to open up new opportunities and raise our profile in different areas.

**Comment:**

- There are collective partnerships in Scotland which are a good source of potential Fellows.
- It would be worthwhile to send the Fellowship survey out to lapsed Fellows too and find out why they left.

Josef Lentsch raised the issue of data protection when contacting Fellows who left 4 – 5 years ago.

Matthew Taylor advised the two most common reasons for lapsed membership were finance and lack of time.

## 8. Report from the Chief Executive (Matthew Taylor)

The Chief Executive's report had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Matthew Taylor advised that there would be an opportunity to drive through awareness when the House is re-opened next July, highlighting the RSA and its achievements and Fellowship engagement. There will be an event to formally open the House and the Great Room.

**Comment:** Bob Porrer: regions and nations should think about what they have to offer in support of this event.

Matthew Taylor replied that one of the things we would be celebrating is that it would be easier to connect from around the UK and the world to those who cannot come into the House.

## 9. Report from FC Trustee Board Members – presented by Zena Martin.

A paper had been circulated prior to the meeting. Zena Martin highlighted the following points:

- The drugs recovery work has been so successful that they are proposing to expand the programme into West Kent.
- RSA Academies has been established as a charitable company and a part-time executive director is being recruited.

## 10. Reports from Fellowship Council working groups (summary papers circulated prior to the meeting)

### Catalyst Group

Michael Ambjorn previewed a short film on the Catalyst Fund that had been produced.

Matthew Taylor: the Catalyst Fund was launched 18 months ago and we had no idea how successful it would be. He added the FC had played an important role by being involved and supporting Catalyst. It is not just the money but the connections and the help given by putting Fellows in touch with other Fellows who can help.

**Question:** Will the film be available on DVD?

**Answer:** It is easily burnable onto a DVD and can be shown on mobile devices.

#### **Comment:**

- It would be useful to brand the film for the US.
- It would be useful to see what Catalyst projects have succeeded as they could prove a useful model for others.

We are surveying projects given funding and will put them on the website with the permission of the Fellows involved. It was noted that unsuccessful Catalyst applicants are put in touch with other Fellows.

**Digital Engagement Group** – nothing to add to the report.

**International Group** – a report is to be compiled for the next meeting. It was reported that the group is working with new member of staff, Matthew Mezey who has an international aspect to his role.

**Education Group** – the group is entering its second year and it is likely to be fairly action orientated. The group is managing to sustain the same level of Fellows. An event is planned with BBC Voices.

**Question:** Are you making any links for Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales?

**Answer:** There was an attempt to replicate in Wales. The aim is to set up some interactions across the UK in the New Year so good initiatives can be replicated.

### Youth Group

**ACTION:** An event sparking the debate about 21<sup>st</sup> century youth work will be held on the 1<sup>st</sup> November at the RSA. If interested in becoming involved / facilitating, contact Rosie Ferguson [rosie.ferguson@londonyouth.org.uk](mailto:rosie.ferguson@londonyouth.org.uk).

## 11. Review of Nature of FC Working Groups

Bob Porrer: after two years it is suggested that it would be appropriate to review the nature and operation of FC Working Groups, with an initial paper at the next meeting from the FC Chair and Deputy Chair. This was **AGREED**.

**ACTION:** Email Bob Porrer [robert.porrer@virginmedia.com](mailto:robert.porrer@virginmedia.com) and Irene Campbell [irene.campbell@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:irene.campbell@eastsussex.gov.uk) with any comments, ideas or issues on FC Working Groups.

**Question:** Has there ever been a Communications Group?

**Answer:** Digital engagement is the way most communications are going. It would be useful to liaise with Jemima Gibbons and integrate into this group.

## 12. Reports from Regions/Nations

Bob Porrer advised he would be convening a meeting of regional / national chairs on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2011.

## 13. A.O.B

Steve King, Chief Operating Officer retires this month. Thanks were extended to him for the contribution he had made during his time at the RSA. Carol Jackson started as his replacement 19/09/11.

This year is the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first regional meeting which was held in Birmingham.

**Comment:** It was a struggle to hear what people have said at the meeting due to the air conditioning. In the interim, is there something we can do about this?

**Update:** The issue of the noise of the air conditioning was raised with Matthew Bates after the meeting. He advised that the air conditioning or heating noise in the Benjamin Franklin Room is an issue that will be resolved during the refurbishment. An alternative room in the House may be used for the December FC meeting and consideration given to enhancing sound equipment.

## 14. Future Meetings for 2011/12

**Dates for FC meetings in 2011/12 are as follows:**

- Thursday 8 December 2011 at the RSA  
(N.B. a pre-meeting to brief FC members on a successful project/activity is planned for 1.00-1.30pm; lunch will be available from 12.15pm)
- Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> February 2012
- Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2012
- Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> September 2012
- Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2012

**ACTION:** If anyone has any suggestions for alternative venues outside London contact Bob Porrer [robert.porrer@virginmedia.com](mailto:robert.porrer@virginmedia.com) and Irene Campbell [irene.campbell@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:irene.campbell@eastsussex.gov.uk).

Bob Porrer thanked the Fellowship Council and closed the meeting at 4.12pm.