

ASLE-UKI 2014 AGM

18 July 2014, 2.15-3.15 pm

John Carr Library, Mappin Building, University of Sheffield

Minutes

1. Introduction and apologies

Apologies were received from Brycchan Carey, Jenny Bavidge, Terry Gifford, Sue Edney and Roman Bartosch.

2. 2014 AGM Minutes and Matters Arising

Minutes were agreed. There were no matters arising

3. Chair's report

At a previous executive meeting, it had been agreed that ASLE-UKI would put in place a protocol for dealing with requests for funding from ASLE-UKI (for PG bursaries etc). A form for implementing this protocol might include the following questions: What event/scheme is the funding requested for? How much money is requested? What will the money pay for? How does the application relate to the aims of ASLE-UKI? How might ASLE-UKI benefit from the funding?

ACTION. Adeline to create a document for applicants for bursaries (etc) to complete when requesting funds.

Adeline noted that the Hay lecture competition had attracted a very low number of submissions, and, because of a relative lack of quality, the judges had been unable to select a winning entry. As a result, Richard Kerridge had

been invited to give the lecture, which proved to be successful. Since the competition will continue to run in the future, it was agreed that the competition would be publicized at a summer conference, with a view to a January deadline. This year's competition has been publicized through the Reading Animals conference.

Adeline reported that plans for a PG essay prize will go ahead. The competition will be launched at the PG conference in Dublin at the end of July with the prize being publication in an un-themed edition of *Green Letters*.

4. Membership report, incl. membership subscriptions 2014/15

John M reported that membership currently stands at 132, an increase from the figure of 120 at the previous AGM. Plans to move the administration of membership over to Routledge have stalled. The executive committee is currently investigating the possibilities of making this change in time for 2016. In order to cover the cost of publishing *Green Letters* with Routledge, the 2015 membership rates will increase to £40/20.

ACTION. 2015 membership form to be uploaded onto ASLE-UKI website.

5. Finance report

ASLE-UKI's balance currently stands at £5452.42.

6. Postgraduate Secretary report

A detailed update from Emma and Michael on the PG conference is included in Appendix A.

7. Election/re-election of officers

There are currently no positions vacant. PG reps will be invited to continue in their roles. It was agreed that the website officer and *Green Letters* editor(s), as appointed officers, would be given voting privileges on the executive committee. The constitution will be amended accordingly.

ACTION: Adeline to update constitution and Louise to place this on the website.

8. Website officer's report

ASLE-UKI's website was recently suspended as payments had not been made to the domain provider. The matter was quickly resolved by Louise. The possibility of obtaining a one-time back-up of the website has emerged and it was agreed to go ahead with this (subject to costs).

ACTION. Louise to get a quotation from Gavin at Bath Spa for backing up the website.

A list of members' publications is now complete but needs to be formatted and uploaded onto the website.

ACTION. John M and Louise to liaise on uploading the list of members' publications.

It was also agreed that ASLE-UKI's website should host a list of potential ecocritical PhD supervisors in the UK & Ireland.

ACTION. John M and Louise to liaise on compiling and uploading the list.

9. *Green Letters* editors' report.

John P reported the following by email: 'We have published three issues in this academic year, the two year agreement by which Bath Spa/Worcester have sponsored the journal is up for renegotiation and we now have upcoming issues on Virtual worlds, sustainability, biosemiotics, drama and performance, and the 'ecology of labour' agreed. The international advisory board has doubled in size to 26 members. We are still looking for contributions to the next unthemed edition for next Spring. These can be submitted directly through the Green Letters website. After last year's AGM, we have gone for ongoing publication meaning that articles appear online before they are published in print (sometimes by several months)... The journal is now growing (subscriptions this year so far are almost triple what they were at the same point last year, and almost double last year's final number – there are currently 18 institutional subscriptions) but this is still a relatively low number, and behind where we considered where we might be as the first year was a little slow'.

10. AOB

No items were discussed in AOB.

Appendix A:

Update for postgraduate conference preparation:

Keynote flights and accommodation: All keynote speakers have accommodation and flights booked, and will be staying at the same hotel. Much of this will be paid through UCD School of English and UCD seed-funding accounts through Valerie Norton at the Humanities Institute, UCD, who has extensive experience in organisation and invoicing in the humanities, as well as general conference organisation, and will continue to process payments. As a postgraduate, Michael is not allowed directly access the seed-funding or UCD school of English funding due to auditing regulations in UCD, but contact with Valerie has ensured that all payments owed will be near immediate after the conference when keynote speakers have submitted their receipts as Michael and Valerie have a working relationship and share an office. Keynotes will be contacted with necessary reimbursement forms for the UCD bursar, which is standard, on **20 July**. Michael has dealt with this before during previous conferences, so he envisages no delay or issues. Keynotes have been informed of these processes

Timetable and Programme: The conference timetable is more or less official. Michael will be giving a paper at the 'Waterways' Panel as we lost one of the speakers and he has a suitable paper already completed.

Catering and Conference Dinner: Catering has been secured via KC Peaches, Dublin. Pastries, fruit, tea and coffee for breakfast (the extra expense due to the early start time). The food is particularly good, and it is exclusively vegetarian and vegan, in line with ASLE's vegetarian policy. Please note that although the conference dinner, at Donneybrook Fair restaurant (approximately 2 miles from

UCD, close to the city centre) has vegetarian and vegan options, we would like to give people a wider option due to the extra cost (€28 plus 10% service), so there will be a meat and fish option. Unfortunately, it seems that we will be unable to set up a prepay option for delegate meals through UCD accounts, having been given different information originally, so an email has been sent out to see who would like to join the conference dinner, and people can pay on the night. Delegates have until **20 July** to confirm their attendance, although one or two extra on the night is to be expected. The keynotes and organisers' meals will be covered via invoice, along with some alcohol (though this can be tricky through UCD invoices, but a limited amount should be acceptable, as we want the main speakers to be covered for the meal). The purchase order is being raised on **July 8**.

Delegate Accommodation: Delegate accommodation is mainly through UCD, but they have been extraordinarily laid-back about finalising for a couple of delegates due to the busy summer period (lots of students). Michael has been dealing with this recently through email, phonecall, and two office visits, and it is nearly settled, and he has been assured that no delegate will be left homeless during their stay at UCD. Delegates requiring receipts of acceptance for home institutions have already been provided with all necessary documents on UCD-headed paper, to which Michael affixed the ASLE symbol under his signature. Any delegate requiring a receipt will get one with the headed paper. Again, it is UCD-headed paper, with ASLE affixed at the bottom. The paper has been entrusted from the department of English so the edits are minimal, just to confirm that it is the ASLE postgrad conference.

Reception: We are happy to report that we have been given money to fund a wine and beer reception at conference end on 31 July from around 6.45 pm for those who wish to mingle and discuss everything, and it's particularly good news for the final papers. We still need to confirm building opening times, but there should be no major issues with this. Confirmation by the end of week beginning July 7.

AV/Tech: The rooms will be ready for all eventualities. Michael is also bringing his lap top and is looking into equipment.

Extra Assistance: A UCD volunteer, **NAME**, has agreed to assist during the conference as we might be a little short-handed with only 2 organisers present. Obviously, only Michael has a good knowledge of the campus and ARTS building (which is quite big), so an extra UCD-based volunteer will be very useful for dealing with caterers, helping people with directions, etc.

Registration

- The payment portal doesn't automatically generate sales confirmations but UCD finance department are kindly sending over updates on payments received for Emma to monitor by manually entering into a spreadsheet.
- We are using registration forms to gather information from attendees. The form clarifies our refund policy (thanks to Louise Squire for her advice on this!) and outlines the closing date for registration which is helpful for now providing a diplomatic way to remind speakers to pay their fees soon.
- As the registration closing date is 16th July, this ought to be tied up by **18th July**, though Emma will allow extra time in the following week should collecting outstanding payments become more involved. Emma will pass on

to Michael information on delegate's special dietary requirements for the caterers and restaurant by **24th July**.

Travel Grants from ASLE-UKI

- Emma is following up with Richard Kerridge for cheques to be made out for each of the recipients of the £100 travel bursary, which she will distribute to the speakers at the conference. The following speakers have been chosen:
 - Mika Perkiomaki – travelling from Finland
 - Taey Kim – raised funding constraints early on and we wanted to secure this speaker
 - Kate Huber – based in Oregon
 - Lenka Filipova – travelling from Berlin
 - Isabel Galleymore – specifically requested to be considered for the bursary and submitted a particularly strong abstract.
- Richard Kerridge has sent out the cheques this week so this is now settled.

Programme

- Following a slow start, a second call for papers generated more interest and we were pleased to receive an excellent variety of strong papers from speakers across the UK, Europe and beyond. There is discernible common ground between papers as speakers touch on some similar territory in interestingly diverse ways and so the papers could be drawn into panels which reflect patterns in current doctoral research and combine to make an exciting programme.
- A draft programme has been distributed but will inevitably alter to reflect changes (one speaker has since withdrawn). Emma will continue to revise

the document but will finalise and print on **28th July**. Any changes after that date will be communicated to speakers at the conference itself.

Chairs

- An appeal for volunteers to chair panels at the conference was met with enthusiasm and many speakers kindly came forward to take on the role. Every chair has been given information about their panel and a note of general guidance.
- Emma will send a reminder (on **17th July**) for chairs to contact their speakers in advance of the conference and will get in touch with the chairs again on **24th July** to ensure that side of things is running smoothly.

