



# The Association of Social Anthropologists of the UK and Commonwealth

## Annual General Meeting

4<sup>th</sup> March 2011, 14.00hrs

RAI, 50, Fitzroy St., London

### DRAFT MINUTES

**Present:** James Fairhead (Chair), Catherine Alexander (Hon. Sec.), Raminder Kaur (Hon. Treasurer), Nayanika Mookherjee (Ethics officer), James Staples (Publications officer), Catherine Degnen (Networks officer), Atyree Sen (Conference Liaison Officer), Ian Fairweather (C-SAP), Hillary Callan, Maureen Bloom, David Shankland (Director, RAI)

David Shankland welcomed the ASA AGM to the RAI expressing hopes of future close collaboration. James Fairhead thanked the RAI for their hospitality.

#### 1) Apologies

Marilyn Strathern (President), Rohan Jackson (Administrator), Richard Fardon, Simone Abram, Roy Ellen.

#### 2) Minutes of the last AGM held at University of Bristol on 7<sup>th</sup> April 2010

Date amended from 2009 to 2010.

Incorrectly spelled names noted and amended.

Otherwise, the Minutes were confirmed as a true record of the AGM 2010.

#### 3) Matters Arising

3b. Reality television.

Noted: GM had sent a letter to OfCom.

#### 4) Election of officers: Hon. Treasurer

JF thanked RK on behalf of the Committee and Membership for her diligence in ensuring that the ASA is still breaking even despite hard times. RK will continue to represent the ASA at the conference in India. Dr Lotte Hoek (Edinburgh) was proposed as RK's successor, once LK has shadowed RK during 2011. It was noted that Dr Hoek was an excellent choice. She was elected unanimously.

#### 5) Matters for Report

##### a) Report from Chair

Chair's report will be posted on the website. Key points below.

*ASA response to the Brown Review and CSR*

- i) The ASA membership has asked the ASA to be more active vis-à-vis changes to HE funding. The ASA Committee decided to institute a blog and has named people to be approached to start blogging.
- ii) ASA Chair has helped HoDs co-ordinate a response which is on the ASA website

*Anthropology and REF*

ASA had helped during the discussions of the best subject subpanel for Anthropology to be part of and the membership of that panel. The final result (Anthropology and Development studies; 10 out of 16 members are anthropologists) is a good result for the discipline, although there is still a need for Anthropology to insist on determining its own standards for quality. ASA had endorsed the appointment of Hastings Donovan to be chair of the sub-panel and noted that a good relationship exists with development studies. One ongoing concern is the definition of 'impact'. HoD discussions continue. However, it is clear that impact can be assessed by the Anthropologists on the panel. The Chair concluded by observing that the 'impact' element was thus less of a threat than had been feared and might even be embraced.

*ESRC strategy*

The Chair had written to the ESRC observing that the new strategy downplayed international, qualitative and independent elements of social science. In response, ESRC had replied all three were still considered important. ESRC is now working out its priorities.

ASA had co-ordinated HoD responses to ESRC's request for suggestions to reduce the volume of poor proposals.

ASA had helped HoDs strategise around DTCs. Most Departments had been successful. The exception of Lampeter meant that Wales now had no access to RCUK funding for doctoral students.

*Agreed:* ASA Chair to support Lampeter by writing to the Welsh Authority pointing out the effect of Wales having no DTC.

*Noted:* the ASA Committee had agreed to hold a conference in Lampeter in order to support the department.

*Academy of Social Sciences*

ASA had re-joined. ASA members should be encouraged to take advantage of this via corporate membership.

*Discussion of report*

It will be increasingly important to keep paper trails (emails etc) that might contribute to an assessment of impact for funders as well as REF. Evidence of research provoking debate is adequate for impact – even if findings are rejected.

WCAA (and membership thereof) important to demonstrate the multiplicity of anthropologies in the world.

It is still unclear if original research had to be published in the same institution as that within which impact (possibly several years later) was being claimed – and if this might threatened scholars' mobility.

### **b) Report from Hon. Treasurer**

Hon. Treasurer's Report and Accounts to be posted on the website. Key points below.

This year's annual surplus is small for the following reasons:

a) the Belfast conference made a loss of £2,000. This is largely accounted for by the effects of the Eyjafjallajökull eruption. Nevertheless, the terms of the contract stating ASA's conference liability has been amended.

AGM thanked Rohan Jackson for his help in supporting attendees at the Belfast conference to return home.

b) NomadIT has changed the way it charges.

c) Monograph income is low this year but this cannot be meaningfully placed in one year or next: overall royalties per monograph is a better indicator of surplus generated from publications.

d) Membership needs to grow and there are several outstanding payments from members. The Committee is taking measures to remedy both.

Noted:

a) Every 20 new members generates £800p.a.

b) The Conference Liaison Officer had successfully applied to the Wenner-Gren for conference support money (India) and is applying for more.

c) Retired members who continue to pay subscriptions, despite this not being required, were particularly thanked for their generosity.

d) £2,000 had been put aside to help young scholars go to the JNU conference but there was insufficient surplus for student assistance to travel to Lampeter.

### *Discussion*

Noted: The need for referees for new applicants to be ASA members might be off-putting, especially where applicants are not in, from, or of the UK and commonwealth.

*Resolved:* Referees of nominees to be professional anthropologists but not necessarily ASA members; the referee page should ask for the referees' affiliations.

### **6) Membership**

*Approved:* New full and affiliate (student RAI/ASA) members (D.Farrer to be approved under Chair's Action on receipt of a second satisfactory reference).

**Action: ASA Committee** to consider whether joint membership rates with RAI were still appropriate in terms of amount charged and relative apportionment to RAI and ASA.

## **7) Ethics Framework amendments**

*Noted:* Version 1 of a draft of proposed revisions had been sent to ASA members. Suggested revisions were incorporated into Version 2.

*Proposed:* to hold a meeting specifically to discuss the draft framework 4-6pm 5<sup>th</sup> March 2011; NM to send Version 3 of draft framework to the ASA Committee before June; to discuss the proposed revisions at the June ASA Committee meeting; NM to send subsequent draft (V4) to all ASA members for information; formal approval AGM 2012. It is to be emphasised in all these stages that the Ethics Framework is a living document and subject to change to keep it relevant; all such changes would be mooted to and approved through the Committee.

*Agreed:* the above proposal should be implemented.

## **8) Publications**

*Noted:*

a) All monographs are on schedule except the volume edited by D.Shankland.

b) ASA Committee is considering changing monograph to Journal in light of pressure from (indirectly) REF. Were this to be the case, then the format of papers from Lampeter might change.

## **9) ASA Conferences**

### **a) Update on ASA Conference 2010**

The Belfast conference had been very successful, despite travel disruptions. The format of such small, intimate gatherings works well and complements larger-scale and international meetings. The mix of formats should continue.

### **b) Plans for ASA conference 2011**

All appears to be going well. Approximately 100 people had signed up, although this was the last day for applying which typically brings in several more.

**Action: AS and RJ** to check if a short extension is viable and if so to let GM know – who will then contact his ‘animals’ lists.

## **10 ) Members’ resolutions**

None received.

## **11) AOB.**

a) *Noted:* C-SAP role had changed

*Agreed:* the C-SAP post on ASA Committee should be replaced by ‘Learning and Teaching Officer’.

*Agreed:* Ian Fairweather to be the Learning and Teaching Officer on the ASA Committee.

b) *Received:* a proposal from the Scottish Universities Alliance (STAR) for the 2013 Decennial Conference to be held in Edinburgh.

*Agreed:* 2013 Decennial Conference to be held in Edinburgh.

c) A Call for applications for the 2014 Conference need to be circulated.

End of AGM 16.00hrs.