

Annual General Meeting 2022

MOTION to re-elect Simon Hill HonFRPS as President for a further term of two years under provision of By-Law 11.3

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Why is 2022 an election year?

The By-Laws of the Society (BL11.3) state that a President shall serve for a term of two years. Elections for President therefore occur every two years. Simon will serve as President until 2023. At the AGM 2022 we must elect a President to take office from the close of the AGM in 2023.

Must a candidate for President be a Trustee?

The By-Laws of the Society (BL11.2) state that the President of the Society is also Chair of the Board of Trustees. The President must therefore be a Trustee of the Society.

Why is no other Trustee standing for the office of President?

At a meeting of the Board of Trustees held on 23 May 2022, the Board discussed Presidential Succession Planning. The Board supported the proposal that Simon be re-elected to the office of President for the term 2023-2025. This was proposed by Tony Cearns (Honorary Treasurer) and seconded by Nicola Bolton (Elected Trustee). The Board voted unanimously to support the proposal and agreed to prepare a Motion to allow Members to vote on this at the AGM 2022.

Do the By-Laws allow for a President to be re-elected for a further term of office?

The By-Laws of the Society (BL11.3) state that a further term of two years may be served if once again elected by the Members.

Why is it beneficial to the Society to re-elect a President for a second term?

In the 17 months from September 2019 to January 2021, the Society has had four Presidents: Roger Albright (served for two years until the close of the AGM in September 2019), Dr Del Barrett (served from September 2019 to November 2019), Dr Alan Hodgson (served from November 2019 to January 2021) and Simon Hill (has served from January 2021). The period of 2019 to 2021 was a time of considerable upheaval in the governance of the Society and, moving forward, it is beneficial to ensure a period of ongoing consistency of commitment, vision and governance.

Has Simon agreed to be re-elected for a second term?

Yes, Simon has agreed and he has provided the following personal statement:

"It was the greatest honour of my photographic career to become President of the Royal Photographic Society in 2021, a society of which I have been a member since my schooldays and which has played such an important part in my own photographic journey. It is a genuine pleasure to work with my fellow Trustees, with Evan and the entire staff team, and with so many dedicated volunteers who generously devote so much of their own time to our Society for the benefit of our fellow Members. Together, in an increasingly complex and challenging environment, we are reimagining the Society to be 'fit for purpose' in this rapidly-changing 21st century - a promise I made when nominated President Elect in 2020 (RPS Journal, May 2020, volume 160, number 2, pp302-303).

Over the past three years we have developed a far-reaching strategy of 21 programmes to be prioritised for delivery over the 2021-2026 five year period; redesigned the RPS Journal into an award-winning publication with a unique and distinctive editorial voice; crafted new By Laws that create a better foundation for good governance; introduced Terms of Reference for all Committees so that each has a clear direction for influencing the delivery of services to Members and advice to the Board; created many new opportunities for online engagement; formed a Nominations Committee to bring transparency, independence and robust professionalism to the recruitment and election of Trustees; established Codes of Conduct to ensure the Society is a safe and inclusive organisation for everyone; approved and facilitated the introduction of a new CRM system that will soon provide a bespoke 'photographic journey' for every Member; begun a process of review of how the Society can better support volunteers in our Group, Regional and International structure; forged stronger relationships with other organisations and are together working on initiatives to bring greater recognition to the professional, semi-professional and hobbyist photography sectors; we have established a stronger position for our Members' Committee and Representatives' Committee and created routes through which they can directly inform and influence Board decisions; and so much more!

We are a Society that is now better placed to achieve its charitable objects of public benefit and we are striving to create a Society in which our Members can derive ever greater engagement with the art and science of photography, and enjoyment from sharing that experience with each other. This is a hugely significant period of transition in the evolution of our Society and there is still much to be done. With the support of Members, I would be delighted to serve in the office of President for a second term, to bring consistency of direction and to continue with this transformational work. The Board will use this time to craft a robust and relevant process for the recruitment of the next President and to ensure a period of hand-over that will ensure continuity of direction as our Society continues to develop."

When did Simon's term of office begin?

Simon has served as a Trustee since his election to the Board of Trustees in September 2019. He was appointed President Elect at an EGM held on 29 May 2020 and became President when Dr Alan Hodgson ASIS HonFRPS stepped down as President in January 2021. Advice received at the time from the Society's lawyers, Stone King LLP, confirmed that Simon's appointment was as substantive President, rather than 'acting' President and that for calculation of 'time in office' purposes Simon's term of two years (BL11.3) commenced from the closure of the AGM in September 2021, notwithstanding the unexpected additional nine months.

For how long can Simon serve as a Trustee of the Society?

The By-Laws of the Society (BL9.4) state that no Trustee may serve more than six consecutive years on the Board of Trustees. Simon was elected a Trustee in September 2019 and may not serve as a Trustee beyond the close of the AGM in 2025. If the Motion to re-elect is passed by Members, Simon will remain a Trustee until the close of the AGM in 2025 and will serve as President until that time which will be six years from his election as a Trustee. If the Motion is not passed, Simon's term as President will end at the AGM 2023 and he will cease to be a Trustee of the Society.

If Simon is re-elected, what is the process for electing a new President to serve from 2025?

There is currently no process for the election of a new President. The office of President Elect was abolished with the adoption of the new By-Laws at the EGM held on 27 March 2021 and the RPS Nominations Committee was established through adoption of those same By-Laws. The Terms of Reference of the RPS Nominations Committee was ratified by the Board of Trustees on 22 November 2021. At a meeting of the Board of Trustees held on 23 May 2022 Trustees considered a paper on the procedure for Presidential Succession. The Board of Trustees is developing this procedure. The Board will seek to ratify a process for ensuring Presidential succession and present this to Members at or before the AGM in September 2023 such that a Presidential election can be held in 2024. The successful candidate would become nominee President from the close of the AGM in 2024 and become President at the AGM in 2025.

What would happen if the post of President became vacant?

If, for any reason, the incumbent were unable to fulfil the duties of President or stepped down prematurely from that office, the By-Laws of the Society (BL11.8) state that whilst the post of President remains vacant the Deputy Chair of Trustees shall perform the functions of President. The Board appointed Mathew Lodge LRPS as Deputy Chair on 18 July 2022.

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