

Minutes – RPS CG committee meeting 2026-03-23

Present

Tom Owens, Alan Cameron, Paul Ashley, Sean Goodhart, Patricia Ruddle, Steff Hutchinson, Nigel Corby, Steven Whittaker

Apologies

Donata Rogozik, Burak Oğuz

Minutes from previous meeting

Previous minutes for 2025-11-27 approved via email outside the meeting.

Agenda Items

1. Chair's Report (Tom Owens)

Most of what I need to say is within my report for the AGM.

However, there are a few things that I should like to note, and advise the committee of.

After the last MemCom meeting, the Scotland Regional Organiser circulated an email with proposals for complicating processes for the group and suggesting different ways of working. Other Chairs responded eloquently and I supported what Documentary had said but added a rider that reflected my viewpoint on MemCom

The main purpose of MemCom from my retiring perspective is to challenge and hold our paid servants to account in delivering effective services for our members.'

This caused a stir and I doubt I saw anything of the circulating emails that resulted in the CEO demanding an apology from me to the entire Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and MemCom.

I issued an apology that was qualified

'I apologise for using language that upset many of you. That was not my intent.

For the record, I have always viewed my role as that of serving the organisation albeit as an unpaid server, as I have been for 11 of the 13 years I have been on the SIG committee.'

The CEO accepted the apology.

I've never seen myself as a volunteer, but always as a servant to the membership, albeit an unpaid servant. I was asked to serve on the Committee by Avril Harris in 2015 to set up an East Anglian activity group and subsequently, I was asked by Alan to take on the role of Chair.

I've always tried to represent the membership at management meetings and fight for fairness. It is unfortunate that in the last 14 days in post, I stirred up a hornet's nest by proclaiming a valid viewpoint that is not necessarily accepted by others.

I would not have been able to represent you all over the last three years without the support and effort of key people on the team. I am most grateful for the technical expertise and wisdom proffered by Sean who has juggled many different technologies to deliver as good a website as any SIG and all with using only the approved tools and platforms unlike some other SIGs.

Tim Hancock was a sterling Secretary and I'm sure Steven Whittaker will bring his own skills to the table.

Donata Rogozik is bringing us a varied diary of speakers and Paul and Nick continue to deliver first class products for us to consume.

I'm also grateful for Alan staying on as Finance Officer and the help he has given me over the years.

Tom Owens ARPS
Chair
March 2026

Additional notes for information:

- Tom pointed that the current RPS Journal issue (vol 166, no.2, p.188) notes from the Trustees' meeting mention the need to increase trustees' interaction with Regions and SIGs. It also mentions that external consultants are supporting developing new A and F distinctions assessment process.
 - There's a concern that there is apparently little interaction with committees of Regions and SIGs in the HQ/trustees' work on these areas. This has led to mass resignations of whole committees and longstanding group chairs in several regions/SIGs. (A strong ally, Mark Philips has recently resigned from being the Documentary SIG chair and is replaced by Harry Hall FRPS.)
- The notes also indicate the RPS is looking for a new website system/host.

- Andy Moor, the distinctions team lead, has left the RPS this week. The new director of education Anthony Luvera, takes on the role.

2. Treasurer's Report (Alan Cameron)

- Alan recommended review of the written report prepared for the AGM following this meeting.
- There is no change to the central levy charged on the SIG by HQ.
- As a group we have a healthy surplus of funds; this is partly because we increased membership fees but mostly savings made in postage by reducing the number of annual issues of the Contemporary Journal.
- We did not contribute to the Eamon McCabe bursary in 2025 (but did gift £500 towards the bursary when it was inaugurated in 2024, <https://rps.org/news/bristol/2024/april/eamonn-mccabe-bursary/>)
- We can afford to make a similar donation in 2026.
 - Sean suggested we should attach a quid pro quo to any donation such that the recipient guarantees to give a talk to the CG when the project is completed.
- We should look to host a face to face event in 2026, there are funds available to cover its costs.
- CG Membership subscription remains at £25/year.
 - Tom noted that there have been recent auto-renewal issues with HQ not taking moneys from members, and members subsequently dropping off lists. We need to keep on top of monthly membership lists and look for unexpected missing members.

3. Activity Group Reports

Written reports are prepared for the following AGM. Brief verbal reports follow:

- **Central** – Steff Hutchinson – group currently averaging 12-14 people per meeting, with a mailing list of 35-40. They're running a photographic chain letter project where folk are given an image from another group member and asked to respond to that over a 3 month period.
- **North** – Patricia Ruddle – averaging 14-22 people per meeting, large group membership with several international participants. Outputting a "showcase" document after each meeting provides an increased visibility of the group's work. They're running a book project, titled "Impermanence" and planning a street photography event.
- **Postal Portfolio** – Nigel Corby – group has 16 people, still looking to recruit 4 more people to fill their 2 circuits for print boxes.
 - Steven will try to drum up some members from the Scotland doc and CG members.
- **Scotland** – Steven Whittaker – good engagement at both Zoom and face to face events. People travelling long distances and even staying overnight locally to participate. The group are involved in the Documentary Photography Awards and a planned RPS Open Day in Scotland.
- **East Anglia** – Tom Owens – a new zine "Return Journey" has just been published by the group. All the year's meetings going forward are already

<p>scheduled and set up in Zoom, but Tom’s resignation from RPS requires we source a new EA group lead.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Note that next EA meeting is scheduled for 2nd April, will need someone to launch the Zoom session. Sean will do that for this time.</i> ● North West – Alan Cameron – fairly small participation, but active with visits to towns across the north and follow ups via Zoom. ● South West – Adrian Hough – <i>missing</i>.
<p>4. Events (Donata Rogozik) <i>Donata unable to attend. See AGM report.</i> <i>Events planning continues well, we keep a tracking spreadsheet on Teams at Event Speaker Planning.xlsx</i></p>
<p>5. Web (Sean Goodhart) Continue to make progress with clunky RPS systems. Getting a few emails complaining that we don’t consistently send out nag reminders with Zoom links. This is a feature of the tools – don’t compare against things like Biletto. I’m sending out reminders and links when I’m able, plus downloading and sharing bookings with activity group leaders (because they can’t access their own meetings on Salesforce...)</p>
<p>6. Social media (Burak Oğuz) Burak not able to attend but Sean commented that social media engagement is growing.</p>
<p>7. Publications - Journal (Paul Ashley, Rolf Kraehenbuehl) Nothing to report.</p>
<p>8. Publications - Concept (Nick Linnett, Burak Oğuz) Nothing to report.</p>
<p>9. AOB Sean/Steff/Steven are all hosting RPS TWT events in the coming months.</p> <p>The committee offered a vote of thanks to Tom, thanking him for the strong leadership over the last three years, wishing him well in the future and hoping that some time he’ll come back into the fold after a refreshing break.</p>
<p>10. 2026 Meeting schedule (carried forward from 2025-11-27 meeting notes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Tuesday 16th June 2026, Committee Meeting 19.00</i> ● <i>Wednesday 9th September 2026, Committee Meeting 19.00</i> ● <i>Thursday 3rd December 2026, Committee Meeting 19.00</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Need to get these in diary – Sean will check Zoom events are set up and share calendar invites.</i>
<p>11. Meeting closed at 18:45</p>

Actions summary

Action #	Task	Who	By when
2026-03-23/1	Broadcast email to EA regional members asking for new chair	Sean	End-Mar
2026-03-23/2	Host EA CG meeting on 2 nd April	Sean	2 nd Apr

2026-03-23/3	Check Zoom calendar events set up for committee meetings per item 10 above, share calendar invites with committee.	Sean	End-Mar
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