

**Documentary Group**  
**Minutes of Annual General Meeting held at**  
**17:30 on 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2025 by video conference**

**Apologies had been received from:**

Gordana Johnson  
Rolf Kraehenbuehl  
John Stephenson  
Nicholas Reuss  
Ted Richards  
Jasen Laks  
Tim Dann  
Tom Walton  
Armando Jongejean  
Carol Olerud

**Registered to attend were:**

Richard Jefferies	Wayne Richards	Malcolm English
Roy Henstock	David Barnes	Chris Pocock
Frank Gresham	Simon Maddison	Vincent Durocher
Carol Olerud	Imogen Tinkler	Andrew Ashworth
Paul Hartley	Tony Shepherdson	Wayne Richards
Hector Molina	Malcolm Boyd	Jo Shepherd
Ray Hobbs	Nigel Griffiths	Nick Linnett
Mark Moore	Steven Whittaker	Gary Ian Stanton
Janey Devine	Phil Melia	Evelynne Rogers
David Collins	Harry Hall	Booker T Skelding
Arunanjan Saha	John Harrison	Oxana Mereuta
Tim Hancock	Michael Knapstein	Chris Pocock
Edoardo Santangelo	David Shillabeer	Tracey Ainsley
Clive Watkins	Carolyn Newton	Hailey Z
Carol Hudson	Peter Dixon	Carmel Morris

1.	<p><b>Welcome and Minutes of the 2023 AGM</b></p> <p>The Chair welcomed everyone, explained the agenda and asked if there were any apologies for absence other than those who had previously indicated such. There were none.</p> <p>The minutes of the previous AGM had been distributed with the meeting notice and posted on the webpage. They were agreed without change by those present and signed by the Secretary on behalf of the Chair.</p> <p>A Zoom poll was taken. The report was carried <i>nem con</i>.</p>
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	It was agreed an abstain option would be included in the future for all polls (ACTION: 25-01)
2.	<p><b>Report from the Chair and Plans for 2025</b></p> <p>The Chair summarised his report. A copy of the text can be viewed online and is attached.  <a href="https://rps.org/media/ertcpn41/report-from-the-chair-agm-2025.pdf">https://rps.org/media/ertcpn41/report-from-the-chair-agm-2025.pdf</a></p> <p>The chair took the opportunity to thank all members for their support during the past year and especially to all the volunteers in the regional sub-groups and central team for their continuing contribution.</p> <p>The focus for 2025 would continue with a UK wide online approach to activities whilst helping the regional groups facilitate face to face meetings</p> <p>The Documentary Group plan will be updated to meet the RPS strategy once it has been issued (ACTION: 25-02)</p> <p>The Chair explained the changes in finance systems and terms of reference and explained the subs for the group would remain at £10 for the next year but would increase to £15 in 2026 to cover increased costs (ACTION: 25-03)</p> <p>The next Documentary awards will start in 2025 and follow with exhibitions in 2026 – suggestions for venues are welcome. The previous awards had excellent engagement throughout the RPS.</p> <p>The latest edition of the Decisive Moment is now available online.</p>
3.	<p><b>DG Finances</b></p> <p>The Chair presented the finance report in the absence of the finance officer. The Report had been distributed online before the meeting. A copy of the text is available online and is attached. Finances overall are healthy with figures in line with expectations. Andrew Burton was introduced as the new officer.</p> <p><a href="https://rps.org/media/wd4dzp1n/dg-financial-report-2024.pdf">https://rps.org/media/wd4dzp1n/dg-financial-report-2024.pdf</a></p>
4.	<p><b>Membership</b></p> <p>The Secretary reported that membership stood at 669 and increase of 65 over the same period last year</p>
5.	<p><b>Election of the 2025 Committee</b></p> <p>The Chair thanked committee members and volunteers for their support. There were no recorded nominations for any of the committee roles.</p>

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	<p>The Chair said that members of 2025 committee were prepared to continue. There were no objections to those prepared to continue in post.</p> <p>The Committee was elected as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) Mark Phillips – Chair</li><li>b) Andrew Burton – Finance Officer</li><li>c) Nick Linnett – Secretary</li></ul> <p>Other volunteers and committee members were co-opted and not up for election. The committee indicated it was still open to engage other volunteers.</p> <p>The Chair explained that the committee members would need to be elected every 3 years, and a succession plan would be looked at to ensure continuity of the committee (Action: 25-04)</p>
6.	<p><b>Q &amp; A</b></p> <p>Questions were raised regarding charging for future talks and locations for exhibitions in East Anglia, a suggestion was also made regarding the timing of talks – could a later time mean better attendances?</p> <p>The Chair responded that the plan was to keep all talks free to group members.</p> <p>Suggestions from the East Anglia regional group for exhibition locations were asked for with responses to be sent to Harry Hall</p>

The formal meeting closed at 18:20 and was followed by a presentation by Murray Ballard

### **Report from the Chair (AGM 2025)**

Firstly, an apology. We should have held our AGM late last year, but with all the RPS changes and requirement to hold AGMs earlier in the year we moved the date of our AGM.

We updated our Group plans during the year and you can find them here. The past year has seen much of my focus on working with other volunteers on issues resulting from the changes to finance processes and new charges for centrally provided services, the events system and more. There are also changes to the Terms of Reference for Groups (SIGs) - three core posts will serve for a three-year term. These are the Chair, Secretary and Finance Officer and appointed via election. Other roles

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on the Volunteer Team are generally appointments based upon people volunteering. I do not intend to routinely put these up for election unless there is a strong view from members that we should.

All SIGs now have the same Terms of Reference (ToR) that we must adhere to, the individual (Group) constitutions have been scrapped. We now have a levy applied to our income (based on membership numbers) to pay for services supplied to us from staff. This will incur an estimated cost £2000 per year. Clearly this will affect our finances.

We have taken a decision to hold our subscription for 2025 at £10, but we will have to increase it in 2026 to ensure we can balance the books. We are proposing to increase it to £15 per year, which, for those who have been members long enough, may recall is what the subs were when I took over as chair over six years ago. At £15, they are still amongst the lowest of all Groups in the RPS. In terms of events, we held four online Engagement Talks, as planned and supported our local/regional teams in putting on meetings , walks and other events.

During 2024, the Documentary Awards Exhibition toured the UK covering – London, Stirling, Inverness, Colwyn, Newcastle, Oxford and Bristol. We estimate that over 10,000 people visited the exhibition, and we managed to put a number of local talks and events on alongside it. The exhibitions and tour could not have happened without a lot of work from Harry Hall and the volunteers in our Northern team - thank you.

Our local / regional teams remain the focus for putting on in-person events, please support them and the volunteers to help make this happen.

Our Decisive Moment continues to be published quarterly with the work now split between Nick (Editor) and Dave (Publisher), ably supported by a small editorial team.

Whilst challenging we have managed to put on the events and publications planned. I hope 2025 is not as challenging!

Mark A Phillips (Chair)

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**RPS Documentary SIG Finance Report 2024**

RPS Documentary Group Financial Statement 2024				
			2024	2023
<b>Income</b>				
	Members Subs	£	6,433.11	£ 5,157.82
	Events	£	486.81	£ -
		£	<b>6,919.92</b>	<b>£ 5,157.82</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>				
	RPS Management Fee	£	994.42	£ -
	Exhibition Costs	£	6,907.75	£ 3,330.00
	Events/Mentoring	£	1,980.00	£ 720.00
	Awards/Prizes	£	2,416.04	£ -
	Mag/Admin/IT	£	1,114.46	£ 692.55
		£	<b>13,412.67</b>	<b>£ 4,742.55</b>
<b>Surplus/(Deficit)</b>		£	<b>(6,492.75)</b>	<b>£ 415.27</b>
<b>Bank Balance</b>		£	<b>19,102.00</b>	<b>£ 25,638.00</b>

**Commentary:**

The group historically operates on a two-year cycle in relation to its largest expense item, the Documentary Photography Awards (DPA). Operating costs are significantly higher during the alternating years in which the majority of the touring DPA Exhibitions are held. 2024 was such a year and this two-year cycle is expected to continue into the future. The deficit for 2024 was £6294. This was in line with the plans and forecasts of the Documentary Group (DG) Committee who had chosen to hold the membership subscription at £10 p.a. and utilise the strong cash reserves to delay any increase to members. Membership numbers pleasingly increased during the year resulting in a higher level of Membership Subs than the previous year.

2024 saw the introduction of a new Management Charge from RPS Finance. This charge has been introduced to recover some of the overhead incurred by the RPS in administering certain aspects of the Special Interest Groups (SIGs). The charge is now levied annually across all SIG's based on membership levels and was £994 for the DG in 2024 being 50% of the rate to be charged in subsequent years. The DG therefore expects a charge in the region of £2000 for 2025.

The annual membership fee of the DG has been held at £10 over the last 6-7 years. Previous to this it was £15 but our current chairman chose to reduce it based on the level of cash reserves that the group had been building. However, the last 6-7 years has seen a significant inflationary increase in the groups operating costs and the introduction of the RPS management charge has placed further pressure on the group finances. The decision

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has been made to hold subscriptions at £10 for 2025 but we will need to increase them to £15 for any renewals or new members joining after 1<sup>st</sup> January 2026.

The Group continues to invest in high quality speakers and events which provide rich content for Group members. The Group also publishes the excellent quarterly Decisive Moment magazine and maintains social media accounts with Instagram and Facebook which we would urge all members to follow, join and participate in.

This is my first period as Finance Officer of the Group and from both a personal and financial perspective I'm extremely grateful to the dedication, enthusiasm and hard work of the team of excellent volunteers that run the Group so efficiently thus keeping the overheads to an absolute minimum.

Andrew Burton – DG Finance Officer