

Scottish Network of the Institute of Translation and Interpreting

www.itiscotland.org.uk

Minutes of the ITI Scottish Network AGM

held at the National Piping Centre, 30-34 McPhater Street, Glasgow, G4 0HW

Saturday 3 December 2022, 11 a.m.

Present:

Committee members: Lynda Hepburn (Convenor), Ramon Inglada (Deputy Convenor), Norma Tait (Treasurer/Events Organiser – East), Victoria Dalrymple (Deputy Treasurer), Catherine Roux (Membership Secretary), Audrey Langlassé (Events Organiser – West), Mike Downey (Webmaster), Elisa Cristóbal-González (Digital Coordinator), Siobhan Gorrie (Newsletter Editor)

Members: Karin Bosshard, Marga Burke, Marian Cairns, Aleksandra Chlon, Sabine Citron, Sylvia Davidson, Iwan Davies, Louisa Davies, Marian Dougan, Laila Ennia, Carol Finch, Alison Hughes, James Kelly, Ania Marchwiak, Lydia Marquardt, Kay McBurney, Simon Oladjins, Fiona Paterson, Maria Pelletta, Rebecca Ritchie, Roxanne Schuller-Green, Louise Souter, Heather Stacey, Susan Swann-Higgins, Alicja Tokarska, Ali Walker

Apologies: Sue Anderson, Kate Bell, Barbara Bonatti, Nicki Bone, Pernille Chapman, Corinne Durand, Renate FitzRoy, Bruce Gordon, Isabel Hurtado de Mendoza, Reiko Inder, Carol Latimer, Angelika Muir-Hartmann, Sally McPhail, Kathleen McNish, Kate Mounce, Helen Robertson, Miranda Stewart, Natalie Tucker, Birgit Wagner, Anne Withers

1. Welcome and apologies

Lynda opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and thanking them for attending, especially those who had travelled in from various islands.

2. Minutes of 2021 AGM

Kay requested an amendment to the 2021 minutes: while the wording was “Kay added that retirees are in principle able to remain members of ScotNet indefinitely”, the word “members” should be replaced with “friends”. With this amendment, the minutes were approved by those in attendance. Proposed: Kay McBurney. Seconded: Iwan Davies.

3. Convenor and Deputy Convenor's report 2021/22: Lynda Hepburn and Ramon Inglada

Lynda and Ramon shared the duty of giving the report on the previous year's events.

Spring workshop, 19 March 2022 (Ramon)

- The subject of the spring workshop was time management, presented by Lydia Marquardt. The event was very successful and had a good structure that ensured everyone in attendance was able to take away something. It also contained valuable contributions from several ScotNet members – in particular, it was good to be able to draw someone from ScotNet's own ranks as the main presenter.
- The venue (the Royal Scots Club in central Edinburgh) was also viewed positively overall, despite the room having slightly low ceilings.
- There were 38 registrations for the event and the feedback was positive as a whole.

Summer workshop in Shetland, 28 May 2022 (Lynda)

- The Shetland event was a huge success, and there was relief that it was able to take place after the necessary postponements.
- The programme of events was excellent and all three speakers (Birgit Wagner, Tom Wills and Sue White) gave engaging presentations. The only slight outlier was the translation exercise, which Lynda asked the attendees for feedback on: in one of the German > English groups, for example, there were too many people to allow everyone to benefit from the exercise. In other cases, there were not enough people working in certain language combinations to form large enough groups.
- The social programme was also enjoyable and provided a Shetland twist, especially through the ceilidh and the Sunday excursion, as well as the informal trip to the Noss National Nature Reserve on Friday.
- Lynda also noted that it would be difficult for future summer workshops to compete with Shetland, but that this also shouldn't be the aim!

Autumn workshop, 1 October 2021 (Ramon)

- The autumn workshop focused on ethical dilemmas in interpreting and was held at Nicolson Square Methodist Church in Edinburgh. After so much focus on translation in most ScotNet events, it was felt that it was important to offer an event relating to interpreting too.
- The speakers (Eloísa Monteoliva and José María Conde, both of whom teach interpreting at Heriot-Watt University) succeeded in holding an interpreting workshop that was suitable for non-interpreters, and kept the tone away from the academic side despite being academics themselves. The practical format with discussion opportunities was viewed as successful.
- There were 65 registrations, which included non-ScotNet members and students – demonstrating that outreach efforts to students worked well and reinforcing awareness that ScotNet is able to have this effect. The number included almost 40 ScotNetters, which is excellent in itself.
- Karin noted that the students appreciated the chance to talk to professional interpreters.

- Fiona expressed that she found it extremely useful to think about the ethics side of the profession, and appreciated that it was possible to identify an issue affecting both translation and interpreting.
- Fiona also noticed that the only negative aspect of the event was the lunch, which many (including committee members) agreed with.

ITI Awards application (Lynda)

- ScotNet applied for an ITI Award during the year (in the category “Regional groups and networks – event/initiative”). The initiative entered was ScotNet’s Covid response, as part of which it was able to maintain CPD opportunities, allow members to make connections and socialise, welcome new members, and – perhaps most importantly – address financial hardship through a fund that had been put in place rapidly at the start of the pandemic.
- Although ScotNet did not win in the category, it was felt that the application was still excellent, and Lynda thanked Mike and Heather for their work on it. ScotNet does intend to put itself forward for the next round of awards (see section 10).

Lynda noted that much of 2022 was business as usual and that ScotNet’s programme of events was set to continue with a similar format in the future, but with someone new at the helm.

4. Treasurer’s report 2021/22: Norma Tait

ScotNet now has a new scrutineer, who has looked over the accounts relating to the past seven years and prepared them in documents that are now available to view on the website (can be found in “ScotNet Accounts” under “Recent posts” on the right-hand side of the website). The funds are the same, but the format is now slightly different. The scrutineer has denoted 2020 and 2021 as “lockdown years” in the documents. Norma highlighted a few points in the figures:

- Although the spring and autumn workshops are free for members, attendees still pay for lunch, which is why there is income from this.
- Some contingency cash was taken to Shetland to pay for the ceilidh band and cash that may be required for tips, for instance. The remaining £50 was refunded to the account.
- Grants included £600 for Shetland and £285 from the hardship fund, which helped cover an ITI membership.
- Some amounts also relate to refunds issued to members – for example, some members had made payments for Shetland, then forgotten and made them again.
- Despite being a significant event, Shetland was a much cheaper venue than others have been, so ScotNet only had to subsidise it by £104. Rooms at the autumn/spring workshops, on the other hand, tend to be expensive to hire, especially as the events are largely funded by ScotNet.
- The total funds balance at the time of the meeting was £7908.22.

Norma noted that there was £696 left in the hardship fund (from which nine people have benefited so far). She asked the membership for their thoughts on what to do with this money now that life is recovering somewhat after Covid, and some members put their thoughts forward.

- Iwan expressed the view that the money had been set up as a hardship fund and should therefore remain as one; he also suggested that members could add more by, for example, adding a £10 donation to their membership fees. This would keep the fund topped up.
- Susan asked about the source of the grants that had been given for Shetland: Norma clarified that they had come from the network's main funds, not from the hardship fund.
- Lynda pointed out that although the worst period of Covid has passed, we may all still experience hardship at one point, perhaps later rather than sooner, which is why it is good to have the fund in place.
- Ramon backed this up with the view that ScotNet should play a supportive role.
- Norma stated that the network funds currently hold a £2000 excess with nothing to spend it on, and suggested as a result that members do not need to pay the next time subscription fees are due (although they could still donate a sum).

At this point, Lynda noted that the rest of the discussion was best left to AOB and it therefore resumed later on (see point 10).

5. Membership Secretary's report: Catherine Roux

There are 132 ScotNet members, which is not too different from the previous year's figure. The members include:

- 64 MITIs
- 8 FITIs
- 26 AITIs
- 17 Affiliates (Graduate Affiliates, Career Affiliates, etc. are now all included in one category)
- 5 Students
- 3 Supporters
- 8 Friends
- 1 Corporate Member

15 members joined over the year, and 14 resigned or let their membership lapse.

There are 120 members of the e-group as not everybody chooses to receive communications in this way.

Numbers are being maintained well, and the network already has three new members since the report was written at the end of October. Some additional points were raised following Catherine's report:

- Marian Dougan asked whether ScotNet could attend more university events in order to attract students. Ramon responded that ScotNet is still attending some in an unofficial capacity, but that he would like to reactivate these activities.
- Lynda also pointed out that there had been a Heriot-Watt and Edinburgh University event where a panel of ScotNet members gave a presentation to the students back in 2005.
- The Heriot-Watt careers fair we regularly attended in the past started asking for payment to hold a stand, but this does not make sense for ScotNet as we send volunteers.

- Karin pointed out that many translation students (a high number of whom are from China) do not plan to stay in the UK and therefore do not necessarily want to join a UK association. She asked whether it may be worth reaching out to fourth-year students at other universities instead.
- James mentioned that he had given a careers talk to MSc students at Edinburgh University in March, and could mention ScotNet at future opportunities.
- Fiona asked whether it would be worth holding a kind of panel event for students, or a free-to-attend cheese and wine/other food-based event, providing them with a chance to meet professional translators – although many had attended the autumn workshop, they did not stay for lunch.

6. Social media and website report (Elisa Cristóbal-González and Mike Downey)

Mike reported on the ScotNet website:

- Mike started by thanking Iwan for his help with handing over the website responsibilities.
- The Webmaster role now has an IT manual, which will allow the website to be handed over again smoothly in the future.
- Mike has been working on keeping the website updated (the committee page, for example). He also recently circulated on the e-group Elisa's instructions on updating profiles on the website.
- Kay asked if the AGM minutes could be added to the website; Mike confirmed they could.

Elisa reported on the social media activities:

- Elisa thanked those who shared and participated on social media, and encouraged everyone to tag the ScotNet accounts in any posts they think would be interesting for ScotNet to know about – Elisa can then share them.
- ScotNet has 1080 Twitter followers (up from 987), including 58 ScotNet members. The account is following 315 other accounts (up from 278); this includes ScotNet members and relevant institutes.
- The Facebook page has 118 followers (up from 114), 27 of whom are ScotNetters. Most posts have a reach of 30 to 80 but can achieve more with post shares.
- Rebecca asked if it would be useful to set up a LinkedIn page – Marian pointed out that LinkedIn posts involve more work than other networks, but Rebecca said that the page could be less for posting and more for people to tag the page so that others can see it, visit and find out more about ScotNet. Elisa will consider this with the committee.
- Ania asked if there was any contingency for Twitter collapsing (such as Mastodon). Elisa confirmed that there was not but that she was open to suggestions.

In addition to the social media and website reports, Siobhan was asked about the progress of the newsletter under this item. The newsletter is still progressing smoothly but Siobhan emphasised that contributions are always welcome and that people should get in touch with any ideas.

7. News from central ITI

- Marian Dougan stated that ScotNet was considered a shining light among the regional networks, and she thanked those members who had contributed to the ITI's recent activities in the areas of equality, diversity and inclusion.
- She mentioned that Paul Wilson is stepping down as Chief Executive and will be missed.
- She also highlighted the central ITI event that is due to take place on 16 December (ITI's Wise Award Winners).

8. Election of office bearers

Lynda stated that much of the committee movement this time was a case of musical chairs: for example, she and Ramon would be swapping roles as Convenor/Deputy Convenor. She urged new members to think about coming on board and that doing so would not have to be a baptism of fire, as they could take on a deputy role with at least a year of training ahead of stepping into the main role (e.g. Deputy Convenor -> Convenor). This also makes the positions easier to take up than they have been in the past. Ramon expressed that his experience on the committee had been positive.

Lynda added that it may be useful to be in a central location for some roles, but that it was not absolutely essential. She also welcomed Ania, who will be shadowing Audrey and joining the committee in 2023, when she will be taking over the position of Events Organiser – West.

Norma added that the Events Organiser – East position was still technically up for grabs, and that she had only taken it because it was free, so a new person would be welcomed.

A round-up of the committee positions:

1. **Convenor.** Outgoing: Lynda Hepburn; standing for election: Ramon Inglada.
2. **Deputy Convenor.** Outgoing: Ramon Inglada; standing for election: Lynda Hepburn.
3. **Treasurer.** Outgoing: Norma Tait; standing for election: Victoria Dalrymple.
4. **Deputy Treasurer.** Outgoing: Victoria Dalrymple; standing for election: Norma Tait.
5. **Membership Secretary:** Outgoing: Catherine Roux; standing for election: Sue Anderson.
6. **Deputy Membership Secretary:** Outgoing: Sue Anderson; standing for election: Catherine Roux.
7. **Events Organiser – East.** Unchanged; re-standing for election: Norma Tait.
8. **Events Organiser – West:** Unchanged; re-standing for election: Audrey Langlassé.
9. **Webmaster.** Unchanged; re-standing for election: Mike Downey.
10. **Digital Coordinator.** Unchanged; re-standing for election: Elisa Cristóbal-González.
11. **Newsletter Editor:** Unchanged; re-standing for election: Siobhan Gorrie
12. **Deputy Newsletter Editor:** Unchanged; re-standing for election: Kathleen McNish.

The committee members remaining in their roles were elected en bloc.

Proposed: Kay McBurney. Seconded: Louise Souter.

The other committee members were elected by role.

Convenor/Deputy Convenor – proposed: Kay McBurney; seconded: Heather Stacey.

Treasurer – proposed: Alicja Tokarska; seconded: Marian Dougan.

Membership Secretary/Deputy Membership Secretary – proposed: Ania Marchwiak; seconded: Alicja Tokarska.

Lynda thanked the committee for their support and feedback over the years, stating that she had thoroughly enjoyed her time as Convenor. She also thanked the membership for their attendance at events and their support. Ramon added his thanks to Lynda for her five years as Convenor, and presented a gift on behalf of the committee.

9. Event planning for 2023

So far, there are two events with plans in place for 2023:

1. Spring workshop: Saturday 18 March

- The workshop will take place at Nicolson Square Methodist Church, and Ciao Roma is planned as the venue for food this time.
- The subject will be gender-inclusive language and Alicja Tokarska will be the speaker: she clarified that the workshop will be aimed at translators working into and out of English. The call notice will be issued before the end of January.

2. Summer workshop: Saturday 27 May

- The chosen venue for the 2023 summer workshop is Edzell, and members were encouraged to book accommodation very soon as there are few options. The town is not on a train line but pick-ups/taxis, etc. can be arranged among the membership.
- Although Pitlochry was the original plan, it proved difficult to make contact with potential venues.
- Louise, Kay and Alison asked about Dundee potentially being a place for attendees to stay, then travel up on the day, or if it would be possible to lay on a bus. The committee said that this would depend on attendees' preferences once things were more firmly in place.
- The planned topic is food/beverage translation and a few names were identified as contacts and potential speakers, such as Alison Hughes (from ScotNet), Marian Dougan (also from ScotNet, who offered to speak on chocolate) and Michael Farrell. Furthermore, Claire Cox was identified as a contact to get potential speakers for the workshop.
- Marian asked whether chocolate would also be a good subject to include.
- The ITI's Food and Drink Network may also find the workshop interesting.
- The committee is due to meet again in January and firm up more details.

10. Any other business

Elisa and Siobhan reported on the next ITI Awards application, which they are working on along with Sue Anderson:

- Siobhan explained that the application would focus on the Shetland workshop this time, as it was a landmark event for ScotNet and involved a great deal of planning and overcoming obstacles. The focus on sustainability also fits in with ITI's goals as an organisation.

- Elisa asked the membership for feedback on any long-term effects that the workshop had had on their careers: for example, whether they had moved into a new subject area.
- Susan asked for more information on the category in which the application was being submitted; Siobhan and Elisa clarified that this would be the “Regional groups and networks – event/initiative” category again.

The membership also returned to the subject of how to approach the hardship fund:

- Norma stated that the fund should be kept as is and that ScotNet’s aim is not at all to make money. However, she addressed that there may be some difficulty in drawing a true distinction around the hardship fund, as everything is in the same bank account.
- Sylvia suggested ringfencing the money in a separate account, but Norma said that a new account may take some time to set up.
- Kay backed up the idea of not charging for the next round of subscription fees; Mike added that this may also be beneficial in view of the cost-of-living crisis.
- Iwan advised getting input from the scrutineer on ringfencing the hardship fund: it could be a separate category in the account, or be regulated by a line in the constitution.
- Susan asked for clarification on the fund’s purpose: Norma explained that it was initially set up to pay ITI membership fees at the onset of Covid, when many translators were losing work, but evolved into aspects such as loans for living expenses. There is no clear-cut set of regulations for awarding the funds.
- Iwan drew on the example of the Architects’ Benevolent Society, which deals with all kinds of issues; similarly, translators and interpreters could have monetary crises strike at any time. If ScotNet’s bank balance is very large, another approach could be to move a percentage of it to the hardship fund.
- Norma also mentioned that even an expensive workshop would leave ScotNet with £5000 in its account.
- It was ultimately decided that the network should dispense with subscription payments for existing members and friends for the 2022/23 membership year, but that anyone wishing to donate voluntarily to the hardship fund could make a payment to the account.

At the end of the meeting, Victoria gave Norma a card and a gift token to thank her for all her work as Treasurer, and Kay extended a vote of thanks to the committee.

The meeting closed at 12:47.