

The Egypt Exploration Society

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY EIGHTH ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING OF THE EGYPT EXPLORATION SOCIETY (THE HUNDRED AND FORTY FIRST SINCE THE FOUNDATION OF THE FUND IN 1882) HELD ONLINE ON SATURDAY 29 NOVEMBER 2025 AT 4.00 PM.

The Chair of the Board of Trustees, Dr Leire Olabarria, opened the meeting at 4.00 pm and welcomed members to the online event. The meeting commenced at 4.00 pm.

The Director noted that 63 members were in attendance at the meeting and thus a quorum had been reached (the minimum being 30 according to Article 15.2a) – altogether 64 attended the meeting. 7 proxy forms had been returned.

0. Annual General Meeting

The Chair began the meeting by thanking her fellow Trustees, the staff, and volunteers of the Society for their hard work and support. Before commencing with the formal business of the meeting, she wished to make those attending aware of how they could vote during the meeting.

(a) Voting

The Chair thanked all those that had mailed proxy forms in advance of the meeting. The Chair reported that 7 proxy forms were returned to the EES London Office before the deadline of 4.00 pm on 27th November 2025. 6 proxy votes were counted, and 1 proxy form was received spoiled. The Chair reminded everyone in attendance who had also submitted a proxy form that they should not vote in the electronic polls.

The online platform allowed for the usual show of hands required according to Article 19.1. This would be done using the online 'poll' facility which would be launched for each of the eight resolutions and would offer the options of 'for', 'against', and 'abstain'.

The Chair announced that she would be exercising the proxy votes in her discretion in favour of all eight resolutions. To reassure members, the Chair noted that in any instance where a consensus was not reached from the show of hands or there was 10% or less between the options selected, then the votes and proxies would be scrutinised, and the results published on the Society's website within a week of the meeting.

As would be normal practice, during the meeting the Chair would propose each of the resolutions in the order set out in the agenda. Accordingly, as each resolution is proposed, the Chair would seek a seconder and then ask for a virtual show of hands.

(b) Asking questions

The Chair noted that no questions were received in advance of the AGM. Questions could therefore be asked verbally by using the 'raise hand' function available after the Treasurer's and Director's reports. Questions could also be put into the chat and the panel would endeavour to answer all questions raised. The Chair asked that the questions were kept concise and clear and, if typed in the chat, requested that members include their name with their questions so that they could be identified for the purposes of the minutes.

The Chair took the notice of the meeting as read and reported the following apologies; Tobias Stone and Yvette Adebajo. The Chair thanked her predecessor, Campbell Price, for his support during the last year, and thanked all Trustees for their support and hard work. The Chair reported that Dr Abeer Eladany and Dr Jennifer Cromwell will retire by rotation, but are standing for re-election in this AGM, and that Dr Roba Ashraf Abdelbadie and Taco van Heusden both resigned in the last year. Campbell Price, Richard Ayre, and Penelope Wilson all stood down as trustees, having reached the end of their two terms. The Chair thanked the retiring trustees for their hard work and contributions to the EES.

1. To receive the Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting

Minutes were available on the Society's website in advance of the meeting and web-links shared with members attending via the website.

The Chair proposed that the minutes were received. Mechthild Burton seconded the resolution which was duly carried.

Online show of hands

For	Against	Abstain
40 (98%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)

Proxy forms

For	Against	Abstain
6	0	0

2. Treasurer's Report

The Chair invited the Treasurer, Sue Preston, to give her report.

The Treasurer started by announcing herself as the interim Treasurer standing in for Yvette Adebajo, who is currently on maternity leave. The Treasurer then reminded the meeting that the figures presented in the Annual Report and Accounts reflected the reporting year 2024-25.

Over the year, the Society reported a positive movement in funds of £647,000, as opposed to a negative movement of £34,000 in 2024. This was made up of a surplus in restricted funds (£66,000; 2024: £55,000) and an unrestricted surplus (£601,000; 2024: -£105,000 deficit). £683,000 was received in legacies over the reporting year (2024: £48,000). The Treasurer conveyed the Society's gratitude towards those who have remembered the EES in their Wills, and reported that while the surplus is welcome, legacies should (where possible) not be used to fund ongoing operations and should instead be used for the future of the Society. The Society will continue to work towards having an operating surplus.

The Society experienced a slight fall in investments value this year; £360,000 to £340,000. Income from the investments remained constant at £14,000.

The Treasurer reported that free reserves currently stand at £189,000 (2024: £161,000) which is slightly above the Trustee's target range of £150,000-£175,000. The Board have also designated £600,000 of reserves into the Development Fund to support the Society's future. This means that most of the legacy funds received during the year are being used for the future development of the Society. The costs associated with the planned capital development have come out of the designated Development Fund. The Development Fund is now £633,000 (2024: £74,000).

A full Audit was performed in 2025 by Sayer Vincent. No concerns were raised, and the process was carried out both in the office and remotely.

The Treasurer summarised the report. The budget for the year currently shows a surplus which again is partly due to legacy income. The Society has invested in new systems which are now resulting in more efficient processes. In addition, a membership campaign is being run to increase membership.

The Treasurer ended by thanking the staff again for the ongoing work they have put into generating income and member benefits for the EES.

Questions

There were no questions from the audience.

The Chair thanked the Treasurer for her presentation.

3. Director's Report

The Chair invited Dr Carl Graves, as Director of the Society, to present the Director's report for 2024-25.

Dr Graves began by thanking all those who had contributed to the work of the Society in the previous year including the Board and Committees, volunteers, members, and his staff team. He also noted that two members of staff, Essam Nagy and Stephanie Boonstra, have both left the Society but were involved in the outputs of the report for this year and wished them the best in their future work. Dr Graves also noted the sad passing of several members over the previous year including Prof Kenneth Kitchen and former EES Vice-Chair, John Johnston. He thanked those members who had remembered the Society in their Will by leaving generous bequests which are crucial for the Society to invest in its sustainable future.

Dr Graves reported that the Society had achieved many of the targets from the 2022-25 business plan, and can now set new objectives for forthcoming years. As before, this will be built around the ongoing Building the Future campaign, which, funds allowing, will enable the Society to transform its London premises and expand its charitable activities to reach even more audiences, both in-person and online. Dr Graves noted that the Society's engagement activities as currently hindered by the London premises, including a lack of stable internet connection, and emphasised the importance of seeing through the development before we can achieve our mission to its fullest extent and provide more of our services online.

Alongside these ambitious plans, the Society aims to enhance its support for research projects on the ground in Egypt by expanding facilities in our Cairo office, building local capacity and launching a new EES research project. Dr Graves reiterated that while the EES should be the trusted provider for information about Egyptian heritage and a bastion for verified, accessible information, much of this is reliant on the completion of the Building the Future campaign.

Dr Graves' presentation gave an overview of the Society's work in five key areas: Research, Publications, Collections, Education, and Outreach & Engagement before ending with some reflections of its future.

(a) **Research**

Three Centenary Awards were granted in the year:

- Heritage Through Local Lenses: Exploring Community Perception of Heritage Places, *Dina Abdelsalam*
- Establishing Early Egyptology Network, *Ian Trumble*
- Robert Wilson's travels in Egypt and Nubia (1820-1821): study of his artwork, diaries and artefacts at the University of Aberdeen, *Marion Devigne*

In April 2024, the Society's efforts to facilitate a sustainable approach to supporting research was recognised by the British Academy when we became a British International Research Institute (BIRI). The Society had previously been part of this community, covering the entire Mediterranean basin, Southwest Asia, and Eastern Africa, until around 2009, and the EES is delighted to have been welcomed back into this network of institutes. While this new status does not bring with it a guarantee of core financial support from the UK government via the British Academy, it has opened doors to project funding which might otherwise have been unavailable. This included our lead on a BIRI collaborative project exploring the impact of climate change on heritage, specifically across Egypt and the wider Southwest Asia and North Africa region.

We held an online conference in September 2024 to establish the current situation of scholarship in the region before hosting a Creative Climate Leadership Retreat in Egypt later that month. The residential retreat offered the opportunity to bring together scholars working on the ground across Egypt, Sudan, Jordan, and as far afield as Kenya. The results of the project were then shared in the online resource hub on the EES website, and in 2025 we launched an Egyptian Archaeology supplement on the subject which is currently exclusively available for members for the first few months of its release.

(b) **Publications**

EES Publication Manager, Julia Thorne, launched three publications in 2024-25:

- *Working in the Suburbs: The Archaeological Remains from Amarna Site M50.14-16*, by Anna Hodgkinson
- *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri: Volume LXXXVIII*, by A. Benaissa, W.B. Henry, et al
- *Howard Carter: from Tracer to Tutankhamun*, by Dr Carl Graves, (part of the Society's new 'Spotlight' series)

A further Spotlight volume published in 2025 focused on the life of Amelia Edwards.

The Publications Manager has also been investigating the scanning and e-publishing of the Society's back catalogue, with the goal of making every title available as an e-book and as 'print on demand'.

(c) **Collections**

Elizabeth Owen, the Society's new Collections Manager, took over the role from Stephanie Boonstra in May this year, after completing several volunteer projects and an internship in our collections. Under Stephanie we completed further conservation work on our Armana replicas, which are currently displayed in an exhibition curated by Edward Scrivens called *The Women Who Changed Egypt*, which can be viewed in the London office or online.

Much of the work of this year has been spent on relocating our collections in preparation for the development and preparing for the removal of the trees damaging the library, which were removed in February 2025. Dr Graves reiterated his thanks to the staff during this undertaking, and thanked Maia Nolan (EES volunteer), James Potts and Richard Ayre (trustees) for helping to relocate vast quantities of library and archive material.

In 2025 the Society's large Howard Carter watercolour travelled to Bolton Museum for display in their temporary exhibition, *In the Temple of the Female Pharaoh: Hatshepsut and Howard Carter*. This painting joined our own oil painting of Amelia B Edwards which has been on display in Bolton since 2024.

(d) Education and training

Owing to the relocation of large parts of our archive over the past year, the Society has been unable to run our usual on-site Egyptian Archaeology Skills School during 2024 and 2025. This has also hindered our in-person educational program, and will remain the case until after the development. Charlotte Jordan has continued to migrate our training sessions online, and thanks to the support of Hannah Pethen has also been able to offer those sessions to early career researcher networks of the British Academy.

Our training program continued in Cairo under Essam Nagy, and we look forward to picking this up again in 2026 when a new team is in place.

Other opportunities for education and training have continued in the 2024-25 period, in particular, the growing partnership between the Society and the Conservation Lab at UCL's Institute of Archaeology, which has now conserved several cartonnage items in our collection. This work has also enabled new research to be carried out on these collections, some of which can be seen in *Ancient Egypt in 50 Discoveries*, edited by Stephanie Boonstra and Campbell Price, which we launched in October 2025.

(e) Outreach and Engagement

An EES-members-only tour to Egypt took place in March and April 2025. Carl Graves accompanied 14 members in search for 'the lost cities of Lower Egypt' and visited sites across Cairo, Alexandria, as well as the Fayum and the Eastern Delta. The next members tour, 'Searching for the lost cities of Upper Egypt', will take place in October 2026.

The relocation of collections and impending tree removal meant that we were unable to host an annual open day in 2024. Our online lectures and courses have continued, and the latter attracted more than almost 1,000 registrants in 2024-25, with 97% of attendants recommending them to others, and receiving a score of 4.9 out of 5 for value for money.

Our study day in 2024 was based on the subject of 'wonder', following the publication of *Seven Wonders of the Ancient World* by our campaign champion, Professor Bettany Hughes. We were then very excited to support Sandstone Global's *Seven Wonders* project to assist their filming in Egypt, the results of which were shown on Channel 5 in the UK and other outlets worldwide.

We were also pleased to support the Current Research in Egyptology conference held in Liverpool in 2024 by awarding a grant to support the travel costs for Egyptian participants, and a panel focusing on the intersection of Egyptology and modern artists.

(f) Membership

The Director reminded the meeting that members were asked at last year's AGM to recruit a member each, to continue attending our online events, and if possible, to set up a regular donation to the Building the Future campaign. Only 10% of new members recruited this year have cited 'recommendation by friends and colleagues' as their reason for joining. Thanks to an exciting program of events and a newly launched podcast we have managed to recruit almost 300 new subscribers, however membership has still dropped slightly, so we urge members to please spread the word and encourage people to become supporters. Gift memberships for the upcoming year are now available on the website.

(g) Building the Future Campaign

Dr Graves began by thanking those who have already contributed to the campaign, as well as Development Manager Ed Scrivens and Head of Finance Neville Leslie.

Dr Graves reported that the removal of the trees from Doughty Street in February 2025 opened the way for our future redevelopment. Planning approval was received from Camden Council in 2024. Work can now commence in 2026, dependent on raising the remaining funds. The Society has already secured pledges and donations of over 75% of our target. Efforts will now be concentrated on raising the final 25%, and we will be asking the members to contribute where possible.

Historical expenditure needed to fix the problems with the premises has taken precious funds away from the Society's charitable objectives, particularly towards research in Egypt. The inaccessibility of the building means that we've been underserving not just people in the local community, but also researchers and members with additional access

requirements. The poor electrical and internet connectivity not only hinders research within the building but also means that we can rarely run online events from the office. This means that staff must work from home to run events, which reduces our capacity to bring you into our collections digitally.

The Building the Future campaign is also being supported by the Society's annual appeal, launched today, which is aiming to raise £15,000 to create a digital time capsule of the building to share with our supporters around the world as well as future generations.

(h) Thanks

The Director ended by thanking his staff team and Board of Trustees again, as well as the members and supporters who continue to attend so many events and make such transformative gifts to the Society.

Questions

Kathleen Sheppard asked if there would be naming opportunities for large enough donors to the Building the Future campaign.

Dr Graves answered that there are naming recognition opportunities, two of which have already been secured for the library and the archive. The Society is still searching for a major donor to discuss supporting the new Papyrology Centre.

4. To receive the Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 2024-25

The Chair proposed the meeting received the Annual Report and Accounts for 2024-25. Hilary McGowan seconded the resolution which was duly carried.

Online show of hands

For	Against	Abstain
47 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

Proxy forms

For	Against	Abstain
6	0	0

5. To approve the appointment of Sayer Vincent LLP as Independent Auditors until the end of the next AGM and to authorise the Board of Trustees to fix their remuneration

The resolution for the appointment of Sayer Vincent LLP as Independent Auditors until the next AGM and for the Board of Trustees to fix their remuneration was proposed by the Chair, seconded by John Baguley, and duly carried.

Online show of hands

For	Against	Abstain
51 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

Proxy forms

For	Against	Abstain
6	0	0

6. To elect members of the Board of Trustees of the Society

The Chair noted that Sue Preston has been nominated for election as a trustee to cover Treasurer Yvette Adebajo's period of maternity leave. The Board recommend Robert Lee and Kathleen Sheppard to fill two vacancies arising. In recommending them for election, the Board has taken into account their knowledge and skills and where applicable their contribution to date, as well as the overall balance of skills and experience that the Board requires.

Details of candidates had been circulated with the notice of meeting and more details on the candidates had been available on the website since September.

6.1 The resolution for the re-election of **Jennifer Cromwell** was proposed by the Chair, seconded by David Hibbert and Mechthild Burton, and duly carried.

Online show of hands

For	Against	Abstain
52 (98%)	0 (0%)	1 (2%)

Proxy forms

For	Against	Abstain
6	0	0

6.2 The resolution for the re-election of **Abeer Eladany** was proposed by the Chair, seconded by Antoinette Maynard, and duly carried.

Online show of hands

For	Against	Abstain
50 (96%)	1 (2%)	1 (2%)

Proxy forms

For	Against	Abstain
6	0	0

6.3 The resolution for the election of **Robert Lee** was proposed by the Chair, seconded by Susan Biddle, and duly carried.

Online show of hands

For	Against	Abstain
49 (94%)	0 (0%)	3 (6%)

Proxy forms

For	Against	Abstain
6	0	0

6.4 The resolution for the election of **Sue Preston (with effect from 1 Dec 2025)** was proposed by the Chair, seconded by Susan Daniels, and duly carried.

Online show of hands

For	Against	Abstain
51 (96%)	0 (0%)	2 (4%)

Proxy forms

For	Against	Abstain
6	0	0

6.5 The resolution for the election of **Kathleen Sheppard** was proposed by the Chair, seconded by Susan Biddle, and duly carried.

Online show of hands

For	Against	Abstain
49 (96%)	0 (0%)	2 (4%)

Proxy forms

For	Against	Abstain
6	0	0

7. Any other business

The Chair thanked members for attending the meeting. The Chair closed the meeting at 5.17 pm.