

SCOTTISH SEATING & WHEELCHAIR GROUP

Minutes of Annual General Meeting held on Friday 26 November 2004 in the Dean Park Hotel, Kirkcaldy. The 16th AGM of SSWG.

1. **Apologies for absence.** Apologies had been received from John Hunter, Fiona Canny, Jennifer Mearns, Jan Morton, Ros Mackintosh, Catherine Mathieson, Andrew Rose, Lorna Fisher, Andy Menzies, Susan Riddell and Alistair More. There were 31 SSWG members present at the meeting.
2. **Minutes of Annual General Meeting of 2003.** The minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting. The acceptance being proposed by Geoff Bardsley and seconded by Rob Farley.

Gavin Drummond as chairperson opened the meeting by thanking Kenneth Munro, Libby Davies and Cathy Dowell for organising the exhibition and meeting. The agenda was rearranged to accommodate the considerable discussion required around the future of SSWG.
3. **Treasurers Report.** A copy of the year's accounts had been circulated with the AGM papers. The group had done well from the investment in Gilt's but there is no further benefit at this time therefore the gilt's money had been moved. SSWG is financially sound but the treasure advised that additional spending should be held off until the future of SSWG had been agreed. The chair thanked the treasurer for her ongoing effective stewardship of the group's funds.
4. **Appointment of Auditor.** Patricia Gibb is willing to continue. This was approved by the meeting.
5. **Membership Fee.** The treasurer informed the meeting that a significant number of members now pay by Standing Order. Any change to the fee might disrupt this and additional funds are not currently required. An increase in membership fee may be required if there is a change in the role/remit of SSWG. Meanwhile it was agreed to keep membership at £7 per year (April – March).
6. **Committee Membership.** New members – Shona Kerr, proposed by Andrew Rose in advance of meeting. From floor – Susan Gold, proposed by John Colvin. Libby Davies (currently co-opted) proposed by Allister Murdoch.
7. **Chairperson's Report and Future of SSWG.**
The chairperson introduced the main agenda item by giving some background to recent changes and links between SSWG and the Posture and Mobility Group (PMG). Although there is a clear link between the two groups there are also significant differences between the health services in Scotland and England and Wales. This has been even more so since health became an issue of devolved government.

SSWG and PMG are also groups of a very different size, with a different role. Currently PMG is based in SE England however it may in the future move towards regionalisation, if so SSWG might be a Scottish Region of the PMG. BHTA is also moving towards regionalisation. SSWGs' standing is in many ways higher than PMG due to its direct SEHD and commercial links

SSWG has struggled over recent years to encourage new members, committee members and to attract users to the group. In addition there are new groups - RETSAG and SCOTRET- that now cover aspects of wheelchair service planning and development etc., previously undertaken by SSWG. This has added to the difficulty in defining the appropriate current role for the group. These changes however now allow SSWG to lobby on behalf of wheelchair services/users as well as continuing to provide training and education. Further widening/changing the scope for SSWG might include considering the overall remit of Rehabilitation and Assistive Technologies. This would considerably widen the range of equipment and clinical assessment etc. and obviously the range of clinicians. It was noted that if such changes take place these would need to be reflected in the constitution. Care would need to be taken to define the benefit for such a change as many uni-disciplinary groups already exist e.g. Orthotics, Prosthetics etc. Other examples of such groups are – RESNA (Rehabilitation Engineering Services of North America), FAST (Forum for Assistive Technology, England).

It was agreed that whatever the future holds for SSWG it should remain Scottish, not just because there would be funding problems if it became part of PMG. Also the Service Sub Group of SSWG needs to continue to consider day to day operational issues of wheelchair services and links with manufacturers.

Clinical Technologists Training Schemes are being set up with a view to gaining HPC Registration – possibly a further reason to expand role of group.

It was agreed that the next step is to arrange a further event to link with all relevant people and to explore the future remit of SSWG. This will be discussed and progressed at the next committee meeting. Possibly a seminar to link common themes e.g. Prosthetics, Orthotics, EATS and wheelchairs and seating. A postural management theme would encourage interest of therapists.

The SE might provide financial support for some suitable events e.g. User Consultation and topics that increase the awareness of the broader picture.

8. **Any other business.** There was no further business.

Before closing the meeting a vote of thanks was extended to Gavin Drummond for his work with SSWG.