



Board of Trustees meeting update

May 2019

1. The Board met in May at YHA Swanage – where we were able to show off our refurbished hostel and meet in one of the great new classrooms so favoured by school groups using the hostel as a basis for trips to the Jurassic Coast. While it was a long journey, especially for the Northern based trustees, it is part of a plan to ensure that trustees get to experience all parts of the YHA network.
2. The weekend started off with dinner in the hostel which was an opportunity to say thank you to Chair Peter Gaines at his last Board meeting before he steps down at this year's AGM. Margaret Hart, the current Vice Chair, will take over after the AGM. As well as the Board and Exec, we were joined the previous CEO and previous Vice Chair and Treasurer. The hostel manager and his team, ably assisted by the food and beverage team, put on a fantastic feast showcasing the latest YHA menu.
3. The key item in the morning session was a discussion on YHA's emerging strategy for 2020-25, where there was a rich and stimulating discussion building on the thinking and discussions that have been starting across the organisation over the last few weeks, including at the recent Exec Business updates. A wider conversation on the emerging strategy will begin at our summer showcasing event and AGM at the end of June. Ultimately the new strategy needs to be finalised, with the business plan to deliver it, by Spring 2020.
4. Other items covered in the morning included
 - an update from the Chair of the independent Nominations Panel, Paula Yates, on this year's recruitment round for trustees;
 - a report on progress with the YHA's People Strategy;
 - the signing off of YHA's accounts, in advance of the AGM;
 - an update on capital projects including early thinking on plans for the next phase of our partnership at Eden; and
 - a discussion on development at YHA Bryn Gwynant, where we are working with the National Park on plans for a major refurbishment of the hostel.
5. After lunch we heard from the hostel manager about his own journey in YHA and latest plans for the hostel. The Board went on to agree proposals for changes to the Board sub-committee structure, including the splitting of the current Performance and Audit Committee into a separate Finance Committee and Audit

and Risk Committee; as well as the creation of a new Impact and Engagement Committee. Trustees also considered annual updates on performance against our KPIs, incidents and customer feedback, as well as reports considering aspects of our work on youth engagement, membership and progress with plans for this year's summer event and AGM.

6. Finally, the Board elected a new Vice Chair, Marcus Holburn, who will also chair the new Audit and Risk Committee, and appointed Simon Reeve as Chair of the new Impact and Engagement Committee.

James Blake
Chief Executive