

# *tasc* ANNUAL REPORT 2015

Including Accounts 1<sup>st</sup> Nov 2013 to 31<sup>st</sup> Oct 2014



*Traditional  
Arts  
Support  
in the  
Community (tasc)*

Registered Charity 1042144

# Introduction: MEETING THE CHALLENGES

***Last year*** presented a number of challenges to the organisation, but despite the difficulties TASC continued to provide help and support to its members and the wider family of folk enthusiasts it comes into contact with.

Our chair, John Messenger, had to stand down in August 2014 for personal reasons. John has been a great source of inspiration and invention since joining the trustees in 2011 and his willingness, knowledge and skills were greatly missed.

We were very fortunate that Pete Damsell was able to step into the breach, providing continuity for the organisation, as well as his own broad and deep understanding of folk music. Not to mention considerable performance skills.

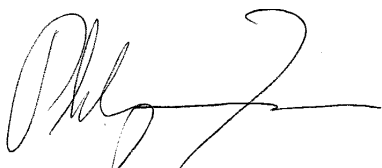
Personal circumstances meant that I had family matters to attend to throughout the year, which also involved my wife, Kathleen, another of our trustees.

Nonetheless we started the year off with another splendid Twelfth Night, the Mari Lwyd making her appearance once more, and providing an excellent example of how to combine the old and the new. Kantref were on sparkling form, and Llandinam Village Hall was heaving.

Recent developments at Llandinam Village Hall, in which I have been involved as chair, have led to explorations of local history. This brought me into contact with Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust, and subsequent meetings have led to the emergence of a possible partnership for the future.

Elsewhere the creation of a new ceilidh band for Montgomery has been an exciting venture, while our earlier progeny in the south west of the county, now transformed into *Di Enw*, go from strength to strength.

As John said in last year's report, the funding situation continues to look uncertain, but in all other respects TASC looks well set for the future after a year of difficulties.



Philip Freeman, TASC Administrator

*Cover Picture: Claire and Lydia, flute-players from Montgomery, taking part in an event at Garth. Top left is Sarah from Di Enw. Far right Philip Freeman, second from right Pete Damsell.*

# Emerging STRATEGY

**Responding** to the challenges that the continued funding uncertainty presents, has been a key part of TASC's thinking during 2014.

To fully develop our ideas has taken longer than anticipated, but the main outlines of it are now in place.

The first question addressed was, how could TASC continue if funding disappeared? The solution is to tie the membership receipts very closely to maintaining the website, which would continue to provide content, links and advice as long as people found them valuable.

This protects the core idea of networking, out of which other work can continue to flow.

The next step is to develop the network through small associated groups and partners.

Our first group was *Di Enw*, which came out of the initial Folk Powys work, but in some ways an even older associate has been *Wild Angels* Community Choir, who regularly take part in our Twelfth Night celebrations.

We decided to try a similar approach to the Folk Powys workshops in creating a Community Ceilidh Band for Montgomery. Contact has



also been made with an emerging Playford Club in Guilsfield. These groups are all at various stages of development and evolution, but continuing to look for, and create, these kind of groups is our strategy for the future. The aim is to make the units self-supporting as soon as possible, but with continued access to help and advice from TASC.

Another way of developing this approach, and widening the scope further would have been to create small folk clubs, appropriate for the 21st century, but the idea didn't find favour with Arts Council of Wales, and they declined to support it.

Further sustainability is sought by creating partnerships. In different ways we are planning to work with Broneirion, CPAT and Shrewsbury Folk Festival in 2015/16.

## aims

TASC aims to encourage individuals to become involved in traditional and tradition-based folk arts, and to support the use of traditional folk music, song and dance in forms appropriate for the 21st century.

Traditional Folk Art is both a living tradition and a repository of materials and techniques. The challenge is to try and understand what makes it distinctive; the better to ensure that nothing vital is lost in its continuing evolution.

TASC's annual programme aims to provide a seasonal gathering, a small programme of events, tuition, and usually a more ambitious and experimental longer-term project.

The website is regularly updated with items of interest and recently has started to include video content.

The current approach is to maintain TASC's core network through membership fees and to develop projects that are self-sustaining.

A number of factors contributed to the lack of progress on any large project but at the end of 2014 there were signs that fruitful partnerships were at last emerging.



# Rolling Out FOLK POWYS

**Montgomery** was the venue selected for a new Folk Powys approach. In March 2014 a series of workshops were begun which aimed to create a ceilidh band that would play on New Year's Eves at the Town Hall.

The process was somewhat accelerated in Montgomery, compared with the earlier Folk Powys project: partly because there were experienced musicians on the ground, and partly because we had learned from our earlier experiences.

The band's first outing was in July and then they played as planned for New Year's Eve. The event was well attended and included dances for children, traditional dances from England and Wales, and also some Breton dances. It finished shortly before midnight so all could take part in the traditional gathering on the square.

As well as developing ensemble skills, the band was introduced to basic harmony and improvisation, learned many new tunes, and came to terms with playing through an amplified sound system. The band also developed skills in calling traditional dances, which will make them a self-contained unit for future events.

Additional ideas are being developed during 2015, such as working specifically on teaching younger children the dances, thereby creating the next generation. This could go hand in hand with teaching the tunes, and creating additional band members for the future.



But these developments are intended to be identified by the band themselves within their own community, rather than being imposed by TASC

# Unfashionable FOLK CLUBS?

**Considerable** effort went into devising a programme to revive folk clubs in Powys. The idea was to develop an experimental situation that re-introduced people to the ideas behind folk clubs: the communal sharing and exploring of a common heritage, rather than the commercial model of performance. The latter separates the performer from audience into a transactional relationship.

The idea had several potential partners, already working within their communities in different ways, and was warmly endorsed by Lucy Bevan of the Arts Service at Powys County Council.

Unfortunately the Arts Council of Wales did not see its way to supporting the project, rejecting it in a rather confused ruling. We can only conclude that the idea does not fit with ACW's internal strategy, particularly when competing with other genres of music. Nonetheless the idea is a good one, and something we may have to pursue in other ways.





# Traditions in Common: WALES, ENGLAND BRITTANY, FRANCE

**Music** has a way of seeping across borders. While Wales is separate from England, that doesn't stop musicians meeting and playing both sides of the border. The same thing happens in France, particularly vis-a-vis Brittany. Brittany is, of course, part of France, and not a separate country, but it does have its own distinctive traditions. That comes in large part from a Celtic heritage that it shares with, among other countries, Wales.

There is a considerable value in examining Breton music and dance for the light it can shed on that of Wales, both for the similarities and the differences. In recent years TASC has been working with the highly regarded band *Kantref* to teach dances from Brittany and France as part of an evening of dance.



The work continued in 2014 with a spring event in Llanidloes, and an autumn event in Llandrindod Wells. As before an afternoon intensive workshop was separated by a communal supper from the Evening Bal.

## Online: FACEBOOK & WEBSITE

**Keeping** in touch with our member groups is very important, and so is giving them opportunities to tell us, and other TASC members, what they are doing. For both of these the website and facebook are ideal. The website continues to grow and provide a source of tunes and ideas for individual and group members. We are conscious that we haven't, however, properly utilised social media, so that will be worked on for the future.

## The Gathering: TWELFTH NIGHT

**Since** the first Twelfth Night in 2007, the event has found a place at the heart of what TASC does. Originally planned to replace a Christmas Ceilidh, which was jostling for notice with the other seasonal events, it has gone from strength to strength. It provides an ideal test bed for ideas and has in its time included songs, music, dance, theatre, poetry, ritual and dance traditions.

**The 2014 event featured Wild Angels with Sue Harris as well as Kantref.** The Mari Lwyd made an appearance and the food was provided by Llandinam WI. As usual the event began in St Llonio's Church and then progressed to the Village Hall. An outstanding display of step dancing from a team of four, including former trustee Pam Knight, rounded off the evening.



It

# Research: PARTNERS

***Future*** projects will very much depend on securing the right partnerships. TASC is mindful of its own fragility, while at the same time being conscious of more than 20 years of achievement.

TASC has always valued partners, but at the moment it seems that the best way of weathering the storms might be to work with partners who have a little more infrastructure and resource. We will, of course, continue to respond to enquiries and requests from wherever they come, but our focus will be on more sustainable partnerships.

Accordingly we are in discussions with the following:

**Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (CPAT)** to explore creating location work at historic sites. We are hoping to involve storytellers in the project and have already had exploratory conversations with Amy Douglas.

**Shewsbury Folk Festival** (for 2016) - to look at helping to source additional content from the marches

**Broneirion** - with a view to a possible folk camp during summer 2015 and some test bed work at Easter.

As noted in previous years, these explorations can run into blind alleys or, as we have noticed, can fail to attract the necessary funding. And no-one can feel they are completely immune from the difficult challenges which we all face.

The future success of any project cannot be guaranteed, no matter how well conceived and we must be prepared for possible disappointment.

This isn't as gloomy as it all might sound. Folk music is very resilient. In its very DNA is the idea of making music with minimal resources. And as well as exciting and difficult projects TASC continues doing the simple things: playing together, passing on information and contacts, meeting for impromptu playing, and encouraging people to enjoy playing, singing and dancing, at whatever level.

We are currently developing Resource Packs that should allow any kind of community to have a go, with or without TASC's active assistance, part of which will be on the TASC website. The future for folk music is still promising, and it will still be thriving once we have all gone, much as it has done for several millennia already.



*(above) Community Project led by Amy Douglas*

# Structure & GOVERNANCE

## Administrator

The day to day running of TASC, along with financial management, members' e-news, website updates and artistic direction is carried out by an Administrator who is appointed at the AGM each year. The Administrator is always one of the Trustees and so the appointment is carried out after the election of the trustees.

## Trustees

The Trustees elected in 2014 were:

John Messenger, Chair  
Pete Damsell, Vice Chair  
Kathleen Freeman, Secretary  
Linda Ward, Human Resources  
Philip Freeman, Administrator & Artistic Director

John Messenger subsequently resigned in August 2014 for personal reasons and Pete Damsell took over as chair.

## Meetings

Trustee meetings were held in April, August and November in 2013 and in January 2014.

## Training

Trustee training is offered to trustees. Induction is provided for new trustees. In addition to the governing document (constitution) TASC has adopted policies on the the following for its guidance:-

- Equal Opportunities
- Welsh Language
- Protection of Children & Vulnerable Adults
- Recruitment of people with a criminal record
- Secure storage, handling, use, retention and disposal of disclosures and disclosure information
- Procurement Policy
- Project Development Protocol

In addition risk assessments are carried out for all TASC events and projects.

## Membership

Membership is open to all who support TASC's aims. Membership runs from 1<sup>st</sup> November each year, which coincides with the financial year. The annual fee is currently kept very low with correspondingly few benefits as the members engagement with TASC activities can vary significantly. The introduction of an Associate Artists category in 2013 is an attempt to reflect the network that is at the heart of how TASC operates in the community.

## Planning

Future planning will depend on the outcome of our discussions with potential partners, and on the level of resources that TASC can secure. During 2015 representatives from our groups will meet with the trustees to develop local ideas more fully alongside the major partnerships.

## Accounts

The accounts are to be found on the following page. The turnover falls below the level required for a full audit and so the accounts are independently inspected, usually every two years. This was last done by Mr John Huninik BSc, ACEA, ICPA of Selective Accounting Limited, Oswestry in March 2013.

TASC has a reserves policy of holding £2,000 as a contingency which is estimated as the cost of running the organisation for one year without any major projects. Cash flow problems meant this was dipped into during 2013 but is now back to the agreed level of £2,000.

The bank account is held at:-

HSBC  
The Cross  
Newtown  
Powys  
SY16 2LX

# Finances

## TASC Receipts & Payments Account

### INCOME

		2013-14	2012-13
<b>Events</b>			
Twelfth Night	note 1	239	261
Bal d'Ithon		450	50
Day of Dance, Llanidloes		252	
		<u>941</u>	<u>310</u>
<b>Projects</b>			
Folk Powys		0	150
Montgomery	note 2	74	
		<u>74</u>	<u>0</u>
<b>Sales</b>			
Llandinam books	note 3	0	12
Severn Suite		0	0
		<u>0</u>	<u>12</u>
<b>General Income</b>			
Membership		50	65
Donations		0	100
		<u>50</u>	<u>165</u>
<b>Grants</b>			
PCC: Community Fund	note 4	3000	6800
		<u>3000</u>	<u>6800</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>4065</b>	<b>7362</b>
Deficit on Year		<b>-2519</b>	

### NOTES

- 1) Twelfth Night Costs were higher as additional artists were employed as well as community musicians
- 2) Montgomer Project will be self supporting by end of 2014-15. These figures represent tapered support tailing off
- 3) Books about Llandinam are no longer being offered for sale
- 4) £3,000 per annum is the usual support from Powys over recent years. A delay in 2011-12 resulted in two payments in 2012-13
- 5) Administrator Fees are £300 per month with an 11 month workload. Cash flow difficulties led to £300 from 2012-13 being paid in 2013-14.

### TOTAL FUNDS

#### 31st October 2014

Balance at HSBC	1733
Paypal Account	35
Cash in Hand	250
	<u>2018</u>

## 1st November 2013 to 31st October 2014

### EXPENDITURE

		2013-14	2012-13
<b>Events</b>			
Twelfth Night	note 1	744	500
Bal d'Ithon		480	
Day of Dance, Llanidloes		350	
		<u>1573</u>	<u>500</u>
<b>Projects</b>			
Folk Powys			209
Montgomery Project	note 2	487	
		<u>487</u>	<u>209</u>
<b>Capacity Building</b>			
Music Books			45
Research & Training			18
		<u>0</u>	<u>63</u>
<b>General Expenditure</b>			
Marketing		400	120
Commission on sales		12	6
Website		24	60
Affiliation Fees		68	90
Insurance		50	50
Llandinam Books		0	16
Misc		19	46
		<u>574</u>	<u>388</u>
<b>Admin</b>			
Postage		7	11
Stationery			10
Trustee Expenses		22	147
Administrator Fees	note 5	3600	3000
Administrator Expenses		320	359
		<u>3949</u>	<u>3527</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>6584</b>	<b>4687</b>

### FUNDS AVAILABLE

#### 31st October 2014

Unrestricted Funds	18
Restricted Funds	
Reserves	2000
	<u>2018</u>

### Balance Sheet

#### As at 31st October 2014

	2014	2013
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>		
Original Cost		
Less Depreciation	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Stock	442	442
Cash at HSBC	1733	4261
Cash at Paypal	35	75
Cash in hand	250	200
	<u>2460</u>	<u>4978</u>
	4978	4978
<b>ACCUMULATED FUND</b>		
Brought forward	4978	2228
Surplus/Deficit in Year	<u>-2519</u>	<u>2750</u>
	2460	4978