

Friends of the Wilson

Synopsis of Minutes of the Trustees' Committee Meeting held on 10 September 2025

Present: Judie Hodsdon(JH), Irene Finlayson(IF), Kat Hoerath(KH), Rachel Roberts(RR), Cristina Hall(CH), Michael Bourne(MB), Andy D'Souza(AD), Steven Sasanov(SS), Freddie Gick(FG), Emma Ferry(EF).

Lisa Edgar (LE) and Jessica Brewster (JB) were also in attendance. JB is the recently appointed CEO of the Cheltenham Trust and she gave Trustees a short briefing about her background and experience. Her most recent post was CEO of the Roses Theatre Tewkesbury.

LE reminded Trustees that the new exhibition on Material Worlds would open on Thursday 18 September and that Friends were invited to the Curator led to our. MB confirmed that the invitation would be sent out to members on the 11th. LE also reported that the University of Gloucestershire best of degree show would be held in the Community Gallery. She also intimated that the cafe was due to be refurbished.

The new Wilson website was now live and LE was asked to ensure the link to the FoTW website was easily accessible. JH thanked LE for acknowledging the contribution and support of the Friends for the website in the press.

JH reported that she continued to have regular meetings with LE and she hoped a good number of Friends would attend the opening of Material Worlds. The Heritage strategy which she had mentioned at the last meeting was now a Heritage Action Plan and it was making progress in getting people interested

The Trustees agreed to hold their third Strategy Day in January 2026 and items for discussion would be agreed at the next Trustees meeting.

On Heritage Day on 6 September, FoTW had staffed a stall on the Promenade along with Claire and Shannon from the Wilson. It was generally felt that there had been more interest shown by passers by this year. The Museum on Wheels and the Big Museum Project had gone down well and it was recommended that the exercise be repeated. It was suggested that the Friends might look at offering something for children and that this be an item for discussion at the Strategy Day.

It was noted that the Events Team had advised that the afternoon talks be moved to Wednesdays to avoid a clash with other events in Cheltenham. The proposed event at the Nook on 6 November was progressing well in its planning and would include talks by Emma Ferry on art from the Wilson and by the head chef at the Nook on food. There would be a silent auction. This last feature would be online around a week before but there would be the opportunity to bid on the evening. It was suggested that one of the artists in residence might donate an art work.

It was noted that there had had been a decline in membership and numbers now stood at approximately 300. Around 25 had no email address. It was agreed it should be possible to post or hand deliver information to them but this would be discussed more widely at the Strategy Day as would payment methods.

A newsletter would be mailed on 11 September and mention would be made of the new website. The FoTW website required some updating. It was suggested that the newsletter

should feature on the website and a synopsis of the Minutes. The new Tourist Information venture should also have information about FoTW.

Future meetings will be on 12 November 2025, 14 January, 11 March, 6 May, 8 July, 9 September, and 11 November 2026 at the Wilson at 2pm