

## **The Japan Society Annual General Meeting 2009**

The Society's 2009 AGM took place on 10 June 2009 at the Embassy of Japan. Despite the strike on the London Underground, the membership was well represented and we are grateful to all who attended and who took the time to vote by proxy.

At this year's AGM, members approved the adoption of a new set of articles of association to reflect new provisions of the Companies Act 2006, and made some additional minor amendments. The principal changes are described in Appendix 1 to the Notice of AGM (please see below) and the full text is available for inspection at the addresses set out therein.

In addition to the above, Christopher Purvis was re-elected Chairman of the Company and elections / re-elections were held for Ordinary Council Members. Congratulations to all those who were elected / re-elected.

If you wish to receive a hard copy of the annual accounts and Council Members' report, please [contact us](#).

### **Minutes of the 112th Annual General Meeting of The Japan Society**

*Held at the Japanese Embassy, 101-104 Piccadilly, London W1 at 6.00 p.m. on Wednesday, 10th June 2009.*

The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming all those present and in particular, the Society's President, the Japanese Ambassador, Mr Shin Ebihara, who had been a strong support since arriving in London. He thanked the Embassy for hosting the AGM and the Knowing Me, Knowing You exhibition.

He thanked all those who had managed to travel to the meeting in difficult conditions and despite the underground strike. A quorum was registered for the meeting.

#### Ambassador Ebihara

Ambassador Ebihara congratulated the Japan Society on its work. It was exactly one year since his arrival in the UK and he had noted the wonderful job the Society was doing to enhance the Japan UK relationship. The Chairman, Christopher Purvis, and his colleagues had done particularly well in fundraising at this time. In thanking Heidi Potter for administering the Society and its members, especially those on the Council and various committees, Ambassador Ebihara wished the Japan Society another fruitful year to come.

#### Christopher Purvis

Christopher Purvis explained that 2008 was the first full year after the merger with Japan 21. It was very pleasing that a financial surplus had been achieved for the year, despite initial indications that this would be difficult.

The AGM was a good opportunity for members to remind themselves that the Japan Society was a charity, whose objects were to promote understanding of Japan and the UK and to encourage the bilateral relationship. The membership and outreach activities of the Society should be focused on furthering its charitable objective.

Looking ahead, the Christopher Purvis pointed out that the Society would be celebrating its 125th anniversary in seven years' time. The new board, elected at the AGM, would consider the long term issues facing the Society including the balance between the programme for schools and non members and that for the Society's membership; the role of publications in the Society; and the role of the Board itself.

In the weeks preceding the AGM, Christopher Purvis had been pleased to hear from a number of members with ideas and suggestions for consideration by the Society. He encouraged all members to communicate regularly with the office and the Board at any time during the year. In closing, the Chairman thanked all who had been involved in preparations for the AGM: Satoru Yoshida, the treasurer; Richard Jones, the returning officer; and in particular, Nigel Wellings and his team at Clifford Chance who had worked on the new Articles of Association and who would be overseeing the voting.

#### Heidi Potter

Heidi Potter gave an overview of Japan Society's new website which was now under construction and would be launched shortly. For the first time since the merger information on all the Japan Society's activities would be integrated on one site. It was hoped that this would make it easier for members to obtain information on the whole programme.

New features included a news area where regular updates would update members on matters of interest beyond the public events programme, a clickable calendar with listings for all events. Full details of the wider schools education programme, small grants, membership matters and Japan Society resources and publications, were also easily accessible.

While the new website would make it easier for members to keep in touch with the Society, those who were not regular internet users should not be concerned; paper copies of the programme and other materials would still be produced.

Members would be notified when the new site was launched and were encouraged to give feedback and suggestions.

#### Agenda Items

There were four ordinary resolutions and one special resolution to be considered at the AGM. Christopher Purvis explained the details and outlined the procedure for voting. Votes were counted after the meeting and the results announced during the subsequent reception marking the opening of the Japan Society members' art exhibition 'Knowing Me, Knowing You'.

#### The following resolutions were passed as ordinary resolutions:

1. To receive and adopt the audited annual accounts for the financial year ended 31 December 2008 and the council members' report.
2. To reappoint Richard Place Dobson as auditors and to authorise the Council to approve their remuneration as thought fit.
3. To re-elect Christopher Purvis as Chairman of the Company.
4. To elect or re-elect Ordinary Council Members of the Company to fill certain vacancies arising. There were nine possible vacancies for ordinary membership to the Council and nine candidates. All were duly elected:

Ryoichi Bamba  
Sean Curtin  
Martin Day  
Jun Kobayashi  
Stephen McEnally  
Masamichi Morooka  
George Olcott  
Keisaku Sano  
Michael Spencer

Council members who had served during the year, but who were standing down were thanked for their contributions to the Society: Marie Conte-Helm, Tsunao Kijima, Katsuhito Nishihori, Nick Reeve. Mami Mizutori, who had served ex officio as Director of the Japan Information and Cultural Centre, had returned to Japan in December and Ken Okaniwa welcomed in her place.

The following resolution was passed as a special resolution:

To adopt new Articles of Association in the form produced to the meeting and initialled by the Chairman for the purposes of identification in substitution for and to the exclusion of the Company's existing Articles of Association.