



Minutes of the 2025 AGM of the Life Sciences Section of the Royal Microscopical Society which was held on Tuesday 1 July 2025 during mmc2025.

Members present: Steve Thomas FRMS (LS Chair), Ferran Valderrama FRMS (LS Deputy Chair) Peter O'Toole FRMS (RMS President), Rod Shipley (RMS Honorary Treasurer), Michelle Peckham FRMS (RMS Executive Honorary Secretary), Nitin Arya FRMS, Anna Baldycheva FRMS, James Bancroft, Sergio Bertazzo, Matt Bilton, Sri Chava, Xiaohui Chen, Sean Collins FRMS, Paul Gunning FRMS, Katie Holden, Morag Rose Hunter, Roland Kroger FRMS, Ileana Micu FRMS, Fabio Nudelman FRMS, Laki Pantazis FRMS, Julia Parker FRMS, Dana Perry, Iain Porter, Lior Pytowski, Jake Richardson, Manfred Schuster FRMS, Daniel Soong FRMS, Claire Wells FRMS, Steven West FRMS, Sali Davis (RMS Chief Executive), Jade Sturdy (RMS Committee Co-ordinator and PA to Chief Executive) and Georgina Fletcher (BiolmagingUK).*

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from: Andy Brown FRMS, Kerry Thompson FRMS, Janosch Heller and Alex Johnson,

2. Minutes of the 2024 AGM

The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

2. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

3. Report from Section Chair

The Section Chair gave the following report:

"It doesn't seem like much time has passed since our last AGM meeting which was held at the Frontiers in Bioimaging meeting in Oxford last November. It's one of the challenges that comes with running our AGM at scientific meetings that fall out of a regular cycle. In the last AGM we had 16 months of activity to report on, whereas here we have just 8.

Having now been chair of the life sciences committee for almost 2 years, I feel that I have settled into the role and have benefited from working alongside the previous chair, Theresa Ward, and experienced committee members such as Claire Wells. This has helped ensure that we have continuity across the committee over time, whilst still allowing individual members freedom for their thoughts, ideas and opinions to shape the future directions of the committee.

As I commented on at the last AGM, the start of my tenure coincided with the appointment of Sali Davis as RMS Chief Executive. I am continually impressed by Sali's professionalism and dedication to the Society. She is ever present at our committee meetings and helps provide the view from the staff side of the Society. Her diplomacy and balanced views, coupled with her passion for the job has been great to work alongside and the support she provides to the committee is most welcome. It feels like Sali has been at the RMS a long time - and I mean this in entirely a good way. She never uses the excuse of still being new in role, and her enthusiasm and support to me and the wider committee is gratefully received.

I reported last time of the ongoing SWOT analysis that aims to renew, refresh and refocus the work of the committee so that we can continue to expand and develop those activities which benefit the society and its members the most. The SWOT analysis had been completed around the time of the last AGM, and taking this forward to the next steps has used a significant amount of time at our last three committee meetings. At each of these meetings we have taken the broad and varied results of the SWOT analysis and have begun to crystallise these towards some clear identifiable actions that we can take forward. I'm always worried at the start of committee meetings that we won't have enough to discuss to fill the time but am always surprised by how quickly the time passes, and the engaging

discussions we have. It certainly highlights the passion and appetite of our committee members to push the Society forward.

These discussions have led to the following outcomes and priorities for the committee.

- A list of sections with whom we have identified possible synergy along with a range of topics are areas of overlap that we think would be mutually beneficial.
- A series of one day workshops and meetings that engage the skills and experiences of the committee members and we believe fill gaps in the RMS offering.
- To explore how Frontiers in Bioimaging could be developed as a meeting and the opportunities for enriching the diversity of the meeting.
- We have also begun to engage closely with the new RMS Histology Focussed Interest Group as our remits have a strong overlap.

By taking the time over the last 12 months to have these discussions, I believe the committee has a clear set of opportunities and actions that it can take forward to further develop microscopy in the life sciences.

In addition to the above, the committee and its members have contributed to a wide range of RMS activities over the past 8 months.

December saw the Committee support the Bristol Actin meeting run by Harry Mellor. Our committee have supported this meeting for many years, and it has been a highlight of the UK cell biology calendar. Unfortunately, after many years of running the meeting Harry has decided it is time to step back from running the meeting. However, from the ashes we are already seeing cell motility colleagues migrate together and run the UK Cell Motility Symposium in London. I'm sure this meeting will fill the gap left by the Actin meeting, and we can support it moving forward.

As a committee we continue to support the mmc meeting which is now in full swing. As committee Chair, I support the organisation of the meeting, and we have three committee members chairing sessions over the 3 days. Thanks to Laki, Morag and Liam for stepping up to do this.

We were due to be supporting the International Congress of Histochemistry and Cytochemistry to be held in August in Italy with Claire well primed and ready to chair the session. Unfortunately, the Italian Society were not able to complete the agreement between the societies and so Claire had to unpack her suitcase! However, Claire has directed her energies elsewhere and it's great to announce that plans for the next Abercrombie Cell Motility Meeting are underway for September 2027 with Claire joined by Michelle Peckham and Rob Insall on the organising committee.

Our committee members have also completed a Wiley book series with 11 chapters focusing on imaging across scales. This labour of love has taken some time to complete but it's great to see this in its final stages and we look forward to seeing the final printed book. Undeterred by this experience, Stefan Linder is also editing a Special Issue of the Journal of Microscopy on microscopy techniques. Morag Rose Hunter has also agreed to write an article on sustainability in microscope facilities for infocus, and we look forward to reading her advice.

In terms of committee members, several people have come to the end of their terms of office at this AGM. We thank Emmanuel Derivery, Mark Rigby, Laki Pantazis and Alessandro di Maio for their hard work and support of the committee over the years. This means we have welcomed a number of new members to the committee, and they will bring new expertise, perspectives and enthusiasm to the committee.

Finally, I just wanted to say a huge thanks to the RMS staff who support the committee, in particular Jade Sturdy who now knows I need several reminders to complete anything and does so in a wonderfully tactful way!

I will wrap up by saying that I think it is an exciting time for the Life Sciences Section. With the continued development of the Bioimaging UK community and our planned activities in this space we should hopefully see this area continue to thrive.”

5. Election of Officers

There being no other nominations, the following Officers were duly elected:

Chair: Steve Thomas, University of Birmingham
Deputy-Chair: Ferran Valderrama, St George's University of London

6. Election of Ordinary Members

There being no other nominations, the following Ordinary Members were duly elected:

Jacquelyn Bond, University of Leeds
Morag Hunter, AstraZeneca
Alexander Johnson, University of Exeter
Johannes Lehmann, University of Oxford
Stefan Linder, University Medical Center Eppendorf, Hamburg
Chun Hao Wong, University of Cambridge
Claire Wells, King's College London

In addition to the above nominated Committee Members: Janosch Heller, Alan Marron and Ileana Micu have been co-opted onto the Committee.

7. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

* **Non-members present:** Luka Cairney, Poppy Cairney