



The Britain-Nigeria Educational Trust

*Promoting friendship & understanding through financial support
for Nigerian education*

THE 16th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
of
THE BRITAIN-NIGERIA EDUCATIONAL TRUST
on **THURSDAY 24 JULY 2025 at 3.00pm**
at
THE ROYAL OVER-SEAS LEAGUE
PARK PLACE, ST. JAMES'S STREET, LONDON SW1A

MINUTES

Attending:

1. Bunmi Adekoya
2. Mrs, Mosunmola Adeniyi, NSF UK
3. Mr. Michael Adeyeye
4. Christine Modupe Afolabi
5. Lady Juliet Atako-Gregory
6. Guest of Lady Atako-Gregory
7. Mr Bimbola Babarinde
8. Ms. Roseline Banjoko, NSF UK
9. Mr. Segun Bamidele
10. Mr Gary Chase
11. Bright Chukumati
12. Jean Degenhardt
13. Dr. Salamatu J Fada
14. Tina Fahn
15. Mr. Bola Falase
16. Brenda M Ferry
17. Mr. Edward Hill
18. Mr Barry Hughes
19. Mr. Kevin Rafferty
20. Mrs Obuaya
21. Ms. Rita Odumosu
22. Mr Samuel Okeiyi
23. Mrs Oladimeji
24. Mr. Derek Sawyer
25. Mrs. Frances Tarr

Trustees

1. David Brandler, *Chair*
2. Edith Ngozi David, *Trustee*
3. Dafe Diejomaoh, *Trustee*
4. Elizabeth Dudley, *Board Secretary*
5. Dele Fatayi Williams, *Honorary Trustee, Nigeria*
6. Prof. Graham Furness, *Vice Chair*
7. Prof. Kabiry Isyaku, *Honorary Trustee, Nigeria*
8. Janet Kirk, *Membership Secretary*
9. John R Lee, *Treasurer*
10. Engr. Greg Ojieh *Nigeria Representative*
11. Mr. Adebayo Oladimeji, *Trustee*
12. Karen Sussex, *Membership Administrator*

Item 1 WELCOME

David Brandler welcomed all attending and introduced Members to those seated on the top table namely **Mr John Lee**, Treasurer; **Janet Kirk**, Membership Secretary; **Karen Sussex**, Membership Administrator; Professor **Graham Furniss**, Vice Chair & **Mr David Brandler**, Chair. And especially **Mr Adebayo Oladimeji Esq.**, BNET Trustee and AGM speaker.

Item 2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To give apologies from General (Dr) YD Gowon, BA PhD, Trustee Chief Mike Abiola and, members of the Trust, including Obajimi Adefiranye, Babatunde Akinyanju, Harry Baker, [REDACTED] Dr Mike Gould, Alan Hofman, Mr & Mrs Panchen G Large, Mr Idem Udoekong and Tony Williams

Item 3 TO RECEIVE THE BNET CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2025 – 24TH JULY 2025

We would normally have someone from the Nigeria High Commissioner attending but the Acting High Commissioner was not available this year. We will have our most valued and long-standing Trustee, going back to BNA days, to give a talk centering on pre BNA and BNET days.

This year the Trust has concentrated on maintaining our existing grants and ensuring the beneficiaries get the maximum benefit from them.

The general economic uncertainty in the country and the steady deterioration in schools' infrastructure & facilities, especially outside the major cities, has meant the Trust has been approached by scores of applications for new grants and it has been difficult to assess them all adequately in order to determine if we are in a position to contribute positively. We are

also aware the security situation, again mainly outside the cities, remains uncertain which means it is difficult for us to visit potential applicants.

So, we have focused on supporting our established partners and I can list them now as follows:

i) N.T.I. KADUNA

We continue to sponsor one serving teacher from each of the 36 States + FCT doing their 3-year online NCE course. We sponsor their 2nd & 3rd year fees, provided they pass the minimum in their exams each year as well as award a prize of N100,000 to the best student at the end of the course. The prize is called the Gary Clark prize named in honour and memory of our late Secretary. To follow up on this project, we remain indebted to Professor Kabiru Isyaku who continues to monitor and handle our projects in the North. It is important we support active teachers looking to increase their teaching expertise rather than those looking to take the course to increase their job prospects elsewhere.

The existing cohort finish this year and we remain in discussions with NTI once the current cohort complete their NCE course to change our sponsorship to those serving teachers looking to take the online degree course which we hope will strengthen their skills even more.

ii) IBRA FOUNDATION SCHOOL – MIRINGA, BORNO STATE

This year the school completed installation of a new overhead water tank & solar driven submersible pump for the school borehole, for a total value of N2.4m which BNET sponsored. Our relationship with this school seems to me to be a template for the way BNET can work with schools to maximise the benefits to the school and to the Trust.

BNET was introduced to the school via a member of the Nigeria High Commission here in London during the height of the Boko Haram problems in the North East and we have supported them for the last eight years with a range of annual projects, proposed by the school management, which we have financed. For the school, knowing we will support them allows them to plan new projects or get help for unexpected setbacks which enables the school to grow. For BNET, we have the satisfaction of knowing our money is well spent and benefiting students that otherwise might not have had that opportunity.

iii) REEL FOUNDATION – LAGOS

Again, this is an organisation we have supported for many years. Members will recall they are based in the outskirts of Lagos and arrange after hours activities for local children combining fun & learning.

Their founder, Ajoke Adeola, attended our 2019 AGM and gave a wonderful review of how the organisation has grown over the last few years thanks, in part, to

our sponsorship. Last year we gave them a grant of N10m to support their work and will be doing so again to assist with operational expenses to give them digital literacy training.

iv) SUPPLY OF NIGERIA & AFRICA JIGSAW PUZZLES

This initiative has proved very popular with the schools where we have distributed them.

We purchased 500 jigsaws (for a total £4000) – half of them showing the countries in Africa & half of the States in Nigeria – and shipped them to Nigeria. Half the quantity was distributed in the South from Lagos by Greg and half in the North from Kano. Again, our thanks to Professor Kabiru.

Helping the children to learn the names & geography of the States of Nigeria and the countries of Africa has combined the gaining of knowledge with the realisation it can be fun – which we feel is a perfect combination.

v) DAILY DELIGHT MONTESSORI SCHOOL – LAGOS

This is another initiative & project in its third year where we sponsor 15 children to attend this school whose parents would otherwise not be able to afford the fees. Fees continue to rise and indeed their landlord has increased their rent by 25% but we will continue to support the school.

vi) HOPE FOR THE VILLAGE CHILD FOUNDATION – KADUNA

This is the Catholic organisation run by Sister Rita which we have supported again for many years. In her eighties, Sister Rita continues to live in Kaduna and run her Foundation that supports children's education in rural communities of South Kaduna. One of their initiatives is to take children on local trips outside their villages and organise out of school drawing & colouring sessions. BNET helps to sponsor the materials and support the volunteers.

vii) LIFE BUILDERS INITIATIVE – ABUJA

We continue to sponsor 25 children in the programme which helps educate children from some of the IDP camps around Abuja. This remains a high priority project which we hope we can expand.

As always, I want to thank the work of the Trust's officers and the support of the Trustees and Members without which, none of the projects would have been successful. Thanks especially to our Secretary Elizabeth Dudley and our Treasurer John Lee who ensure the administration of the Trust is up to date and financially sound.

Above all, I thank again our Nigerian based Trustees, Engineer Greg Ojieh, Professor Kabiru Isyaku & Dele Fatayi-Williams. Without their experienced and expert input in so many areas, BNET would be a far less effective organisation.

Finally, I thank Frances Tarr our retired administrator for coming out for the day to assist us and Karen Sussex who runs and updates our website, sends out newsletters and has now also taken our membership administration under her most efficient control.

And, of course, I thank all of the members, those of you who are here and those of you who could not make it for your continued support.

David Brandler, 24-07-2025

Item 4 TO RECEIVE THE TREASURER'S REPORT & ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2024

The Treasurer, Mr JR Lee, presented his report on the accounts for the period ending December 31, 2024.

Compared to the previous year, activity in 2024 was at a similar level, taking into account movement with the Nigeria Naira exchange rate.

Bank interest and investment increased by 8 % to £6,748, while voluntary income comprising membership subscriptions, tax reclaims and donations came to £3,624.

Overall income for the year increased to £ 10,372 [£10,216].

Grants were £ 18,020 as against £24,304 in 2023.

Governance and supporting costs, including administrative expenses £ 26,347 a decrease of 9% over 2023. This was partially explained by an Exchange loss of £4,304. This Loss resulted from the movement of GBP to our Naira account. In normal years this figure would be a gain.

Our overall Funds closing balance reduced to £204,721 as against in 2023 £238,923.

The Trustees are addressing as a priority the need to attract new members and donors.

Before closing the Treasurer explained that the full set of accounts are available for viewing on the BNET website and a summary on the Charities Commission website.

There being no further questions, the report of the Treasurer and Statement of Financial Activities for 2024 were approved by a show of hands of all members present.

Item 5 **APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS**

The Treasurer, John Lee, confirmed that Messrs Crowe Clark Whitehill LLP have signified their willingness to continue as Independent Examiners of the Trust and proposed their re-appointed for the ensuing year.

Kevin Rafferty seconded the motion which was agreed by all members present.

Item 6 **ELECTION OF TRUSTEES**

Under Cause 5(9) of the Constitution of the Britain-Nigeria Educational Trust, one third of the Board of Trustees retire annually at the Annual General Meeting. Those due to retire at this Annual General are, **David Brandler, Mr Bayo Oladimeji and Elizabeth Dudley**. All trustees, being eligible and having signified their willingness to serve again, are prepared to be re-elected

Vice Chair, Professor Graham Furniss, proposed the motion that David Brandler, Bayo Oladimeji and Elizabeth Dudley should be re-elected en bloc. Lady Juliet Atako-Gregory seconded the motion which was agreed by all members present.

Item 8 **TO CONSIDER ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

None raised.

Item 9 **CLOSURE**

The Chair David Brandler formally closed the business of the AGM at 3:30pm and handed the floor to BNET's longest serving Trustee and AGM speaker, Mr Adebayo Oladimeji Esq.

Item 10. **MR ADEBAYO OLADIMEJ ESQ.**

"Mr Chairman, Mr David Brandler, members of the Board and Trustees, distinguished ladies and gentlemen. I would like to talk about a few things that BNET has done, to remind ourselves how BNET came to be.

The Britain Nigeria Educational Trust is a non-political, non-sectarian membership charity that seeks to promote friendship and understanding between Britain and Nigeria. We do this through our grants in assisting educational development throughout the country.

We have a set purpose and objectives that we follow. We support the training and development of teachers in Nigeria alongside ongoing commitments, for example small grants with no administrative commitment. We spend capital where significant and accountable projects are identified. It is a commitment of the Trust that the development of education in Nigeria is strictly honoured.

Previously known as the The Alhaji Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa Memorial Trust, established in 1968, in honour of the late Prime Minister of Nigeria, BNET was established in 2007 and registered as a Charity on 17 September 2007. It is governed by its constitution.

The Trust continues to promote the development of education throughout Nigeria as we believe in progress through education. The Board meets three times a year. BNET is inundated with a number of requests for resources so there is a strictly scrutinised and accountable project selection criteria, not least including sustainability.

Projects from the Trust's inception include, but are not limited to, the Pacelli School for Blind and Partially Sighted Children; The Gethsemane Rehabilitation Centre in Jos; Hope for the Village Child Foundation; an E-Learning Centre and dedicated library at the University of Benin (UNIBEN), Benin City; the Immaculate Conception Girls' Secondary School, Umutu; The Daily Delight School in Lagos and the Nigerian Schools Foundation (UK).

I extend my huge appreciation and gratitude to each and every member. We appreciate what you do for others but also what you enable us to do. Your welcome support for education is the cornerstone of our success. It is a commitment that has enabled us to make a meaningful impact on the lives of so many young Nigerians over the years. BNET remains steadfast in its determination to promote and provide essential educational services throughout Nigeria.

Ladies and gentlemen, our commitment to BNET and to the teacher training activities in Nigeria remains a key aspect of our work. Well trained, motivated teachers are the backbone of every educational system and we are committed to supporting the training of teachers through our support of NTI in particular. We remain committed to our mission. I thank you once again for your support for education in Nigeria. Together we have achieved so much and I remain confident we will continue to make positive impact in the years ahead, especially for the young children of Nigeria.”

The Chair, David Brandler, thanked Mr Oladimeji for his speech as a timely reminder of all the work the Trust has done over the years.

“BNET was fortunate to inherit the funds of the The Alhaji Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa Memorial Trust and BNA, alongside some bequests, but it is important to remember that the £20 membership contribution and your attendance at the AGM enables the genuinely positive work that BNET is able to undertake. Thank you as members for retaining your loyalty to the organisation.

Let me hand over to our Nigeria Representative, Engr. Greg Ojieh, to say a few words.”

NIGERIA REPRESENTATIVE, ENGR. GREG OJIEH

“I want to especially thank members of the Trust as without you we would not be able to do this important work.

I hope we may be able to show to you next year how the projects we undertake have impacted so you may see the appreciation of the children we have touched which encourages continuing loyalty to our commitment towards education in Nigeria.

One of the things that has kept us going, including your contributions that enable us to continue our work, is the trust placed in us when donations made are able to be of benefit towards children's education. Our organisation has earned the respect of people who have donated to us as they know the Trust will use funds judiciously and specifically for the purpose of the donations received.

However, there is a difference between policy and implementation. It is not always easy for those of us on the ground to visit all the projects as there are often challenges faced. I would like to give you a few examples that illustrate the gravity of some of these problems.

Occasionally at previous AGMs, members ask about some parts of Nigeria that BNET is not involved in. I would like to say BNET is involved in both the North and the South of Nigeria, if not in every state all of the time.

In the South, we have had interactions with Nnamdi Azikiwe University where we funded some of the specialist equipment in their Pharmacy Department. In this particular instance, it was essential that the equipment was housed in a particular temperature and humidity-controlled room. Yet, when we went to install the equipment we found there was no such room available for the installation. This was an obstacle that we had to resolve.

Another project involved visiting a village where there was road to the school we had agreed to donate school furniture. That presented a practical challenge but we pursued to ensure the objective was received.

In the north, in Kano, where our Trustee Professor Isyaku is very active, we began donating books and educational opportunities for internally displaced children (IDP.) This project has now become one of our flagship projects: the School Without Walls in Abuja.

Our NTI work is a national project and we have long supported teacher training to teachers from each state in Nigeria. We are also supporting schools in Osun State.

The UniBEN project provided its own particular challenges. We provided computers with a generator but the e-centre did not take off as the university did not have funds to run generators and there was no NEPA supply at the university. This meant the computers initially were unutilised. We were eventually able to work with the university to identify a solution, including the supply of an inverter which we had to directly organise.

The King's College project was initially received with scepticism and the school wanted the money directly; however it was the donor's requirement that BNET retained financial control. The project was not without further problems but we completed it satisfactorily. As similar project at Edo College was more smooth sailing and executed well.

Our project in Umutu, initially a flagship project, provided its own challenges following a change in school management that led to what was specifically a girls' boarding school becoming a mixed school. This countered the aim of the donor and BNET's insistence of funding dependent on the original purpose dictated whether the funds would continue or not.

In the South East currently, security issues remain problematic and when we receive requests from certain villages, the Trust has to remain careful and vigilant in deciding if and how to proceed.

The spread of our projects demonstrate that BNET is operative throughout Nigeria and, once the Trust approves the go-ahead for any project, I always visit to ensure the project is implemented correctly and remains sustainable.

This is to illustrate that whilst we do encounter problems, I would like to reassure our members and donors that your contributions are spent well. The Trust's determined objective remains to uplift education in Nigeria particularly for those who would not otherwise had the opportunity to go to school."

PROFESSOR KABIRU ISYAKU

"I would like to emphasise that with BNET's NTI project, every single state in Nigeria is covered."

QUESTIONS

None raised.



Elizabeth Oritsejolomi Dudley
Secretary to the Board of Trustees
THE BRITAIN-NIGERIA EDUCATIONAL TRUST
secretary@britain-nigeria.org
Britain-Nigeria.org