

Castle critics invited to

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join trustees and have say

CRITICS of the Cardigan Castle project have been invited to take a seat among the trustees to have their say.

Cadwgan Trust's AGM on Thursday heard that 20,000 visitors had been welcomed into the castle since completion of the site's dramatic transformation earlier this year.

Trust secretary Jonathan Timms thanked those involved in the project for their "amazing contribution" and the meeting heard that an estimated £80,000 a year now needed to be generated to run the building.

Mr Timms said: "It's an expensive business keeping this building warm and dry. We have to provide for future renewal of assets to keep the castle safe and in good condition. The trust has to realise commercial activities to keep the site open to the public."

Questions were raised during the

by Cambrian News reporter
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meeting about a lack of dialogue between trustees and members of the community who had concerns about the inclusion of heritage at the site.

Cllr Gareth Lloyd, one of the trustees, said: "I don't know why there is a breakdown in communication. There were seats available for people to become trustees, there are still three seats available."

He added that it was uncertain if or not people had been correctly quoted as using the word "bigots" as claimed in the press.

Cllr Lloyd said two dates had already been offered to meet with those concerned about the direction of the castle project, but the opportunity had not been taken.

"So we ask them, why have they not met with us? I would hope that we are quite happy to listen."

Mr Timms added: "We would like more trustees. We would really like people who can help to come forward. The board has never turned down a member."

"There is no indication of that whatsoever."

Calls were also made for more communication with volunteers and the need for them to be represented on the board.

One volunteer said: "We are working in the dark, we need a place to get together and ask questions."

It was agreed that provision for this would be put in place.

During the meeting Jani Tucker was re-elected as trustee and Eleri Non Davies and Keith Evans were elected.

Father Seamus Cunneane, Cllr

Gwynf Jenkins and former trustee Glen Johnson were appointed as patrons of Cadwgan in recognition of their "long-term enthusiasm and support for the restoration of Cardigan Castle".

Mr Johnson said: "I hope the next 900-odd years has as rich and glorious history and does as much for the community as its predecessors."

In August Glen Johnson, a key figure in the £12m restoration project, quit as a trustee following what he described as "months of online harassment" by people unhappy with aspects of the project since the castle's official opening in April.

There has been criticism, in particular, of the decision to allow the English folk group Bellowhead to headline a July concert at the site of the first National Eisteddfod in 1176.