



All Party Parliamentary Group on

Yoga in Society

**Annual General Meeting, Wednesday 24th April 2019
Committee Room 2A L, House of Lords, London**

Chair: Lord Brooke of Alverthorpe

In Attendance: Jonathan Lord MP, Heather Mason (Yoga in Society), Lord Stone of Blackheath, Lord Gordon of Strathblane, Baroness Healy of Primrose Hill, Lord Cromwell, Dr. Tina Cartwright (University of Westminster), Tom Cardigan (Yoga in Society)

Apologies: Alex Sobel MP

1. Welcome and Future Directions

Attendees were welcomed by the chair, noting the meeting agenda and overview of the year ahead.

2. Nomination of Officers – Unanimously agreed as below:

Co-Chairs: Jonathan Lord MP (Unopposed), Lord Brooke of Alverthorpe (Unopposed)

Vice Chair: Alex Sobel MP (Unopposed)

Secretary: Baroness Healy of Primrose Hill (Unopposed)

Treasurer: Lord Stone of Blackheath (Unopposed)

Secretariat: Yoga in Society (represented by Heather Mason)

3. Short Breathing Practice with Heather Mason

Attendees were invited to take part in a 3-minute coherent breathing practice.

4. Brief Annual Review of APPG for Yoga in Society

Heather Mason provided an annual review of the APPG's activity and the state of yoga in the UK. Heather noted recent events involving yoga; including yoga for Grenfell, the Yoga in Healthcare Conference, a response in Her Majesty's Questions, the onset of Social Prescribing in June, and interest from Public Health England. Plans are underway for a London-wide Breathing Day, and for movement towards yoga in social prescribing around the UK with a view to nation-wide engagement for International Yoga Day

Lord Stone of Blackheath – Noted links to integration of yoga with criminal justice in Israel, suggesting contacts. Also noting benefits of yoga in changing consciousness with global orientation.

Baroness Healy of Primrose Hill – Suggested expanding engagement with media sources.

Lord Cromwell – Drew attention to barriers to engagement, suggested appealing to fitness media and organisations. Tina Cartwright responded by agreeing that appealing to fitness media is a valuable route to broaden engagement but may act as a barrier in under-served populations.

5. Overview of UK Research Supporting Yoga's Role in Wellbeing

Dr. Tina Cartwright provided an overview of the state of yoga research in the UK. Tina highlighted the role of yoga as a multi-component intervention and discussed ways in which yoga has potential to address the key issues of long-term health conditions and the economic burden of healthcare. Research shows yoga is effective in improving health outcomes in a range of long-term health conditions, including musculoskeletal conditions and mental health, as well as being associated with health-protective behaviours. Research is still in its infancy but is showing significant support for yoga as an adjunctive treatment for mental and physical health conditions, and in support of patient activation. Evidence suggests a need to improve accessibility of yoga in under-served populations.

Lord Cromwell – How do we reach under-served populations? Tina – social prescribing is a valuable way to provide wider access to yoga within community settings. Addressing barriers to engagement, such as beliefs about benefits and appropriateness of yoga, is also key.

Lord Stone of Blackheath – Notes links between parliament and commonwealth offices, would be beneficial in research and engagement. Suggests meeting Baroness Scotland.

6. Other Business

Jonathan Lord MP raised a question about contacts within the House of Commons and use of space in Portcullis House for future meetings and yoga sessions. It was generally agreed that this would facilitate greater engagement from MPs.

7. Closing Remarks

The meeting was closed by the Chair, adding that dates for the next meeting would be agreed and distributed ASAP.