

British-American Parliamentary Group



Executive Committee Report

2012-13

(For the year ended 31 March 2013)

British-American Parliamentary Group



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(For the year ended 31 March 2013)

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OFFICERS & MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2012-2013

Honorary Joint Presidents

The Speaker of the House of Commons
The Lord Speaker

Vice-Presidents

The Rt. Hon. Margaret Beckett, MP
The Rt. Hon. the Baroness Boothroyd, PC, OM
The Rt. Hon. the Lord Carrington, KG, GCMG, CH, MC, DL
The Rt. Hon. Nick Clegg, MP
The Rt. Hon. Iain Duncan Smith, MP
The Rt. Hon. the Lord Falconer of Thoroton, QC
The Rt. Hon. William Hague, MP
The Rt. Hon. the Lord Howard of Lympne, QC
The Rt. Hon. the Lord Howe of Aberavon, Kt, CH, QC
The Rt. Hon. the Lord Hurd of Westwell, CH, CBE
The Rt. Hon. the Lord Jopling, DL
The Rt. Hon. Charles Kennedy, MP
The Rt. Hon. the Lord Mackay of Clashfern, KT
The Rt. Hon. the Lord Martin of Springburn
The Rt. Hon. David Miliband, MP
The Rt. Hon. Ed Miliband, MP
The Rt. Hon. the Lord Molyneux of Killead, KBE
The Rt. Hon. the Lord Morris of Aberavon, KG, QC
The Rt. Hon. the Lord Owen, CH
The Rt. Hon. Jack Straw, MP

Honorary Chairman The Prime Minister

Vice-Chairmen The Rt. Hon. Andrew Mitchell, MP
The Rt. Hon. Douglas Alexander, MP

Honorary Secretary Brian Donohoe, MP

Honorary Treasurers The Rt. Hon. Greg Knight, MP
The Rt. Hon. John Spellar, MP

MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE House of Commons

Government

Christopher Chope, OBE, MP
Geoffrey Clifton-Brown, MP
Jack Lopresti, MP
Mark Pritchard, MP
The Rt. Hon. Sir John Stanley, MP
Stephen Williams, MP

Opposition

The Rt. Hon. Ann Clwyd, MP
Michael Dugher, MP
The Rt. Hon. Elfyn Llwyd, MP
Andy Love, MP
Austin Mitchell, MP
David Watts, MP

House of Lords

Conservative

The Rt. Hon. the Lord Trimble
The Baroness O’Cathain, OBE

Labour

The Rt. Hon. the Lord Anderson of Swansea, DL
The Rt. Hon. the Lord McFall of Alcluith

Liberal Democrat

The Baroness Scott of Needham Market

Cross Bench

The Rt. Hon. the Lord Fellowes GCB GCVO QSO

Administrator: Hannah Mitchell

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Telephone: 020 7219 6209; Fax: 020 7219 5972; email: bapg@parliament.uk

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Executive Committee 2012-13 met on: 23rd October 2012; 11th December 2012; 5th February 2013 and 14th May 2013.

The Annual General Meeting, at which the current Executive Committee was elected, took place on 11th July 2012.

The following indicates attendances at the Executive Committee meetings since the last AGM:

The Rt. Hon. Douglas Alexander, MP	1/4
The Rt. Hon. the Lord Anderson of Swansea	3/4
Christopher Chope, MP, OBE, MP	1/4
Geoffrey Clifton-Brown, MP	0/4
The Rt. Hon. Ann Clwyd, MP	0/4
Brian Donohoe, MP	3/4
Michael Dugher, MP	0/4
The Rt. Hon. the Lord Fellowes, GCB, GCVO, QSO	3/3
The Rt. Hon. Greg Knight, MP	3/4
The Rt. Hon. Elfyn Llwyd, MP	2/4
Jack Lopresti, MP	1/4
Andy Love, MP	1/4
The Rt. Hon. the Lord McFall of Alcluith	2/4
The Rt. Hon. Andrew Mitchell, MP	2/4
Austin Mitchell, MP	3/4
The Baroness O'Cathain, OBE	2/4
Mark Pritchard, MP	1/4
The Baroness Scott of Needham Market	4/4
The Rt. Hon. John Spellar, MP	4/4
The Rt. Hon. Sir John Stanley, MP	2/4
The Rt. Hon. the Lord Trimble	3/4
David Watts, MP	3/4
Stephen Williams, MP	0/4

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2012-13

Foreword to the accounts

Introduction

The British-American Parliamentary Group (BAPG) was formed in 1937 to promote closer relations and understanding between Members of both Houses of Parliament of the United Kingdom and Members of both Houses of Congress of the United States of America by providing opportunities for discussion on problems common to both countries and for the exchange of visits and information. The BAPG Objectives, Activities and Rules were formally adopted on 5 July 1967 and have since been subject to minor amendments in 1968, 1981, 1982, 1996, 2000, 2003 and 2007, 2008 and 2009.

The BAPG acts as an autonomous body within Parliament. It appoints its own administrative staff to carry out its objectives and the Rules of the BAPG define the limitations on its powers.

The management of the BAPG is vested in the Executive Committee. The Honorary Secretary, who is a member of the Executive Committee, is primarily responsible for the BAPG's activities; the Administrator, who is an official of the BAPG and not a Member of the Executive Committee, is responsible for the executive work of the BAPG. The Chairman of the BAPG is the Prime Minister. The two Vice-Chairmen of the Executive Committee are normally of Cabinet and Shadow Cabinet rank.

Principal activities of the British-American Parliamentary Group

The format of the annual programme of activities has historically consisted of: one Annual Parliamentary / Congressional Conference; one ad hoc specialist delegation visit to the United States (budget allowing); one 'familiarisation' visit to the United States co-sponsored with the United States Department of State and attendance as observers at a biennial course held in the United States for newly elected Members of Congress. Also, every four years, during a Presidential election year members attend the Democratic and Republican National Party Conventions to see Presidential candidate selection.

Various other activities are held in the United Kingdom with distinguished visitors from the United States.

Unfortunately, it was not possible to schedule the 2012 Annual Parliamentary / Congressional Conference as the House Speaker, Representative John Boehner, had not appointed a House BAPG delegation since the Republicans took control of the House in the 2010 mid-term elections. This was further complicated by the debt ceiling negotiations and the general election in the U.S. in 2012.

However, it still proved to be a busy year for the BAPG with several visits to the U.S. and election related events.

In June 2012, the BAPG, in conjunction with the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Embassy, sent four Members of Parliament together with four rising political stars from related parties to the U.S. to learn about the U.S. election process and observe firsthand the Republican primary in South Dakota. (The U.S. Department of State funded the entire cost of the four rising political stars). In July, the annual BAPG / U.S. Department of State Co-Sponsored Visit took place to the U.S., albeit with fewer participants (six rather than the usual eight), due to reduced funding.

In August, two members (Government and Opposition) attended the Republican National Convention in Tampa, Florida, to see Presidential candidate selection. The following month, two members (again one Government and one Opposition member) attended the Democratic National Convention in Charlotte, North Carolina.

In December 2012, four members attended as observers the Harvard bi-partisan programme for newly elected Members of Congress conducted by the Institute of Politics.

Relationship with the House of Commons Commission and House of Lords House Committee

The BAPG is funded mainly by a grant from the House of Commons Commission and the House of Lords House Committee in the proportion 70:30. The BAPG submits a detailed income and expenditure budget together with bids for expenditure on a rolling three year programme usually in September each year or at the request of the Clerks of the Overseas Offices who are the budget holders on behalf of the House of Commons Commission and House of Lords House Committee. Approval of the budget and the amount of the grant for the coming year is agreed in the first quarter of the following year. The grant is paid in one instalment, usually in April each year.

Prior to 2008-09 the BAPG was funded by HM Treasury.

Results for the year

The Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure (page 13) shows that the BAPG had net income of £1,322 for the year 2012-13. The grant for the year was £99,000.

It should be noted that the 2012 Annual Parliamentary / Congressional Conference with the House of Representatives BAPG did not take place principally due to the House Speaker not yet having appointed a delegation and it was consequently agreed with the budget holders in the House of Commons and House of Lords that the BAPG may carry forward the sum of £38,000 allocated for the conference in the event it could be re-scheduled or the funds spent on a comparable purpose at a later date.

The BAPG currently holds £53,178 in reserves (page 14).

The BAPG off-sets its carbon emissions from flights via purchase of high quality Certified Emissions Reduction (CER) credits facilitated by the Government Carbon Offsetting Facility under the Kyoto Protocol's Clean Development Mechanism (CDM).

Prompt payment initiative

In line with best commercial practice it is BAPG policy to pay bills in accordance with contractual conditions. Where no such conditions exist, it aims to pay within 30 days of receipt of goods and services or presentation of a valid invoice, whichever is the later. There are no figures available to show performance against this target.

Provision of information to Auditors

As far as the Accounting Officer is aware there is no relevant audit information of which the BAPG's auditors, the NAO, are unaware. In addition, the Accounting Officer has taken all the steps necessary to make himself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the BAPG's auditors are aware of that information.

The Rt. Hon Greg Knight MP (*Accounting Officer*)

_____ 2013

Statement of Accounting Officer's responsibilities

Under the Financial Memorandum, the House of Commons Commission and the House of Lords House Committee have directed the BAPG to prepare for each financial year a statement of accounts to the year ended 31 March. The accounts are prepared on an accruals basis and must give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of BAPG and of its income and expenditure and cash flows for the financial year.

In preparing the accounts, the Accounting Officer is required to:

- give due regard to the procedures laid down in the Financial Memorandum including relevant accounting and disclosure requirements, and apply suitable accounting policies on a consistent basis;
- make judgments and estimates on a reasonable basis;
- state whether applicable standards have been followed and disclose and explain any material departures in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis, unless it is inappropriate to presume that the BAPG will continue in operation.

The Executive Committee has appointed the Joint Honorary Treasurer of the opposite party to the Honorary Secretary, The Rt. Hon. Greg Knight, MP, as Accounting Officer of the BAPG. The responsibilities of an 'Accounting Officer' include responsibility for the propriety and regularity of the public finances, keeping proper records and safeguarding the BAPG's assets, as set out in the Financial Memorandum agreed between the BAPG, the House of Commons Commission and the House of Lords House Committee.

Governance Statement

The British-American Parliamentary Group (BAPG) maintains a system of governance that supports the achievement of the objectives and activities of the BAPG whilst safeguarding the public funds and assets in a manner that is consistent with the Financial Memorandum issued by the House of Commons Commission and the House of Lords House Committee for the use of the Group's grant. In discharging its responsibilities the BAPG has had regard to the principles of the Corporate Governance Code for Central Government and considers there are no areas where it has not complied with the spirit of the code.

Governance framework

The BAPG acts as an autonomous body within Parliament. The management of the BAPG is vested in an Executive Committee. The Honorary Secretary and Joint Honorary Treasurers, who are nominated by the Executive Committee and ratified each year at the Annual General Meeting as additional members of the Executive Committee with full voting rights, are primarily responsible for the Group's activities. The Chairman of the Group is the Prime Minister. The two Vice-Chairmen are normally of Cabinet and Shadow Cabinet rank.

The Group's Rules are set out in a single constitutional document and detail the administrative arrangements and membership of the Group.

The day to day activities are the responsibility of the Administrator who is employed by the Executive Committee and operates under the general direction of the Officers to implement its policy decisions.

The Group's Rules provide that the Executive Committee shall meet four times a year between one year's AGM and the next. The Executive Committee may determine a time and place for an Annual General Meeting of members to which it submits a report of its proceedings. The Rules also allow for the Executive Committee to call Special General Meetings to consider and determine any matter of interest and importance that may arise.

Relationship with Sponsor: House of Commons Commission and House of Lords House Committee

The House of Commons Commission and House of Lords House Committee provide funding to the BAPG by way of a grant in the proportion 70:30.

The BAPG's relationship with its funding sponsors is embodied in a Financial Memorandum. The Financial Memorandum is an integral part of the governance arrangements.

The Financial Memorandum places a responsibility on the Group to ensure that all resources are used economically, efficiently and effectively. During 2011-12 work was done on a new Financial Memorandum which provided for greater financial reporting to the "budget holders", the Clerks of the Overseas Offices, and limits on reserves. The new Financial Memorandum was in place with effect from April 2012

In addition, the Clerks of the Overseas Offices attend meetings of the BAPG Executive Committee to provide assurance to the House of Commons Commission and House of Lords House Committee that the funding is disbursed in accordance with the purposes and principles set out in the Financial Memorandum as well as to provide such advice and assistance as requested.

The Executive Committee appoints an Accounting Officer from its membership, normally one of the Joint Honorary Treasurers, to ensure that the uses to which the Group puts funds received from the grant are consistent with the purposes for which the grant was given and comply with any conditions attached to them including the provisions of the Financial Memorandum.

The BAPG's accounts and the activities that underpin them are currently subject to external audit by the Comptroller and Auditor General supported by the National Audit Office (NAO). The NAO carry out their audits in accordance with the International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) and each year report the results of their work to the BAPG's Executive Committee.

Internal Audit services of both Houses may also be used to provide assurance to the sponsors and to the BAPG Executive Committee. The Internal Audit services have the right of access to all the BAPG records, operations and physical properties of the body and to the Executive Committee members, employees and contractors, as set out in the Financial Memorandum.

The Group's governance activities in 2012-13

The Executive Committee met on four occasions in 2012-13 to consider matters that are set out in the Committee's Annual Report of the Executive Committee. Amongst other things the Committee examined the Group's draft programme of activities for the present year and estimated costs; reviewed the Group's budgetary position and forecast budget for 2013-2014; analysed the Group's audited accounts for 2012-13 and the Annual Report of the Honorary Secretary as well as other matters for discussion and endorsement by the Annual General Meeting.

Risk management

The risk management process is the responsibility of the Executive Committee and it oversees a risk register which identifies and evaluates possible risks to the Group and sets out the internal controls or mitigating actions in place to manage the risks. It is the responsibility of the Committee to regularly appraise the existing risks and to recommend action where necessary. Importantly, this process is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk. In doing this, it can provide only reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness.

The risk register currently identifies 11 risks which fall within the low risk areas after mitigating actions have been taken. The major operational risk is one of fraud which is mitigated by the segregation of duties: payments are by cheque which require two of three signatories and there are agreed authorisation/delegation limits on financial expenditure as detailed in the annex of the Financial Memorandum.

Significant issues

A significant concern is the future sustainability of the present level of programme activities. The BAPG has seen a cut to its funding with no inflationary uplift since 2010 while programme costs have risen year on year (flights, fuel, tax, hotel accommodation). The BAPG has worked hard to drive down costs where it can flying members Premium Economy on restricted tickets and reducing the number of members participating in BAPG activities but the shortfall in funding going forward is of considerable concern and will be a significant issue in 2014-2015, an election year in the U.S., when there are valuable opportunities to meet with counterparts in the U.S. by way of various established visits. Taking away these opportunities not only reduces the group's ability to engage with counterparts in the U.S. at a time when major negotiations are underway on a possible free trade deal between the U.S. and Europe but it also reduces the experience and understanding of British MPs and in so doing inhibits them from being good Parliamentarians.

Review of the effectiveness of the governance

The Accounting Officer has responsibility for maintaining effective governance and periodically to review the processes and procedures that are in place. The Accounting Officer's statement is set out below.

My review of the BAPG's governance is informed by the deliberations of the British- American Parliamentary Group's Annual General Meeting, the decisions of the Executive Committee, as well as the views of the Administrator, the Honorary Secretary and the Honorary Treasurers of the BAPG, who have day to day responsibility for the governance processes and procedures.

I have also had regard to guidance on internal control and financial management issued by the House of Commons Commission and House of Lords House Committee under the auspices of the Financial Memorandum, as well as the comments made by the external auditors in their management letter and other reports made to the BAPG.

On an enduring basis, I advise the BAPG's Executive Committee on the implications of the periodic reviews of the BAPG's governance processes and procedures. I intend to ensure that the BAPG continues to maintain a reliable system of governance.

I consider that the Executive Committee has an effective stewardship over the resources of the Group.

The BAPG's Accounts and the activities that underpin them are currently subject to external audit by the Comptroller and Auditor General, supported by the National Audit Office (NAO). The NAO carry out their audits in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) and each year report the results of their work to the BAPG's Executive Committee.

The Rt. Hon Greg Knight MP (Accounting Officer)
_____ 2013

The Independent Auditor's report to the members of the British-American Parliamentary Group

I have audited the financial statements of the British-American Parliamentary Group (the Group) for the year ended 31 March 2013. The financial statements comprise: the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure; the Statement of Financial Position; the Statement of Cash Flows; the Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity; and the related notes. These financial statements have been prepared under the accounting policies set out within them.

Respective responsibilities of the Accounting Officer and Auditor

As explained more fully in the Statement of Accounting Officer's Responsibilities, the Accounting Officer is responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, under the terms of the Financial Memorandum agreed with the House of Commons Commission and the House of Lords House Committee. My responsibility is to audit and express an opinion on the financial statements. I conducted my audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland). Those standards require me and my staff to comply with the Auditing Practices Board's Ethical Standards for Auditors.

Scope of the audit of the financial statements

An audit involves obtaining evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error. This includes an assessment of: whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the Group's circumstances and have been consistently applied and adequately disclosed; the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by the Group; and the overall presentation of the financial statements. In addition I read all the financial and non-financial information in the Foreword to identify material inconsistencies with the audited financial statements. If I become aware of any apparent material misstatements or inconsistencies, I consider the implications for my report.

I am required to obtain sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the expenditure and income recorded in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by the Group and the financial transactions recorded in the financial statements conform to the authorities which govern them.

Opinion on regularity

In my opinion, in all material respects the expenditure and income recorded in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by the Group and the financial transactions recorded in the financial statements conform to the authorities which govern them.

Opinion on financial statements

In my opinion:

- the financial statements give a true and fair view of the state of the British-American Parliamentary Group's affairs as at 31 March 2013 and of the net operating cost for the year then ended; and
- the financial statements have been properly prepared in accordance with the Financial Memorandum agreed with the House of Commons Commission and the House of Lords House Committee.

Opinion on other matters

In my opinion:

- the information given in the Foreword for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.

Matters on which I report by exception

I have nothing to report in respect of the following matters which I report to you if, in my opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records; or
- I have not received all of the information and explanations I require for my audit; or
- the Governance Statement does not reflect compliance with HM Treasury's guidance.

Bryan Ingleby
Director on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General
May 2013

National Audit Office
157-197 Buckingham Palace Road
Victoria
London
SW1W 9SP

Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure

For the year ended 31 March 2013

	Note	2012-13 £	2011-12 £
Administration Costs:			
Staff costs	3	33,068	32,534
Other administration costs	4	8,621	10,454
		41,689	42,988
Programme Costs:			
Programme costs	5	57,847	90,650
		99,536	133,638
Income:			
Grant-In-Aid	2	(99,000)	(99,000)
Operating income	2	(1,199)	(1,095)
Total Income		(100,199)	(100,095)
Net Operating Cost/(Income) before Interest and Tax		(663)	33,543
Bank Interest Receivable		(824)	(829)
Corporation Tax Payable		165	166
Net Operating Cost/(Income) after Interest and Tax		(1,322)	32,880

Statement of Financial Position

For the year ended 31 March 2013

		<u>31 Mar 2013</u>	<u>31 Mar 2012</u>
	<u>Note</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>
Current assets:			
Trade and other receivables	7	3,696	1,088
Cash and cash equivalents	8	51,408	61,042
Total current assets		55,104	62,130
Current liabilities			
Trade and other payables	9	(1,926)	(15,274)
Total current liabilities		(1,926)	(15,274)
Assets less liabilities		53,178	46,856
Taxpayers' equity:			
General fund		53,178	46,856
Total taxpayers' equity		53,178	46,856

The financial statements on pages 13 to 16 were formally agreed by the Executive Committee on 14th May 2013 and were signed on its behalf by:

Rt. Hon. Greg Knight, MP (Accounting Officer)

The notes on pages 17 to 21 form part of the accounts

Statement of Cash Flows

For year ended 31 March 2013

		2012-13	2011-12
	Note	£	£
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net operating income		1,322	(32,880)
Interest Receivable		(824)	(829)
Tax Payable		165	166
Adjustments for non-cash transactions – audit fee		5,000	5,000
(Increase)/Decrease in trade and other receivables	7	(2,608)	(259)
Increase/(Decrease) in trade payables	9	(13,348)	11,555
Tax Paid		(165)	(166)
Net cash outflow from operating activities		(10,458)	(17,413)
Cash flows from investing activities			
Net cash outflow from investing activities		-	-
Cash flows from financing activities			
Net cash inflow from financing activities		824	829
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents in the period		(9,634)	(16,584)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period	8	61,042	77,626
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period	8	51,408	61,042

The notes on pages 17 to 21 form part of the accounts

Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity

For the year ended 31 March 2013

	Note	General Fund
		£
Balance at 31 March 2011		74,736
Non-cash charges – auditor's remuneration		5,000
Net operating cost for the year		(32,880)
Balance at 31 March 2012		46,856
Changes in taxpayers' equity for 2012-13		
Non-cash charges – auditor's remuneration	4	5,000
Net operating income for the year		1,322
Balance at 31 March 2013		53,178

Notes to the Accounts

1. Statement of accounting policies

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the 2012-13 Government *Financial Reporting Manual (FReM)*. The accounting policies contained in the FReM apply International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) as adapted or interpreted for the public sector context. Where the FReM permits a choice of accounting policy, the accounting policy which is judged to be the most appropriate to the particular circumstances of the BAPG for the purpose of giving a true and fair view has been selected. The particular policies adopted by the BAPG are described below. They have been applied consistently in dealing with items that are considered material to the accounts.

1.1 Non-Current Assets

Office equipment is written off as expenditure in full in the year of acquisition.

1.2 Operating Income

Such income relates directly to the operating activities of the BAPG. It principally comprises the grant-in-aid, annual subscriptions, life subscriptions, donations and interest on the bank deposit accounts.

Annual subscriptions cover a 12 month period from 1st April each year. Annual subscriptions paid between 1st January and 31st March each year are treated as subscriptions paid in advance (deferred income). Life subscriptions are included as income in full in the year of receipt.

1.3 Gains and losses

All gains and losses are included in the statement of comprehensive net expenditure.

1.4 Taxation

The activities of the BAPG are outside the scope of VAT. Corporation tax is paid on bank interest. Total tax paid during 2012-13 was £165.

1.5 Research and development expenditure

The BAPG does not engage in research and development activity.

1.6 Personal data-related incidents

The BAPG had no personal data-related incidents during the reporting year.

2. Income

	<u>2012-13</u>	<u>2011-12</u>
	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>
Parliamentary Grant-In-Aid	99,000	99,000
Annual subscriptions	824	852
Life subscriptions	280	120
Donations	95	123
Total	<u>100,199</u>	<u>100,095</u>

3. Staff numbers and related costs

Staff costs comprise:

	<u>2012-13</u>	<u>2011-12</u>
	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>
Wages and salaries	25,133	24,658
Social security costs	1,770	1,711
Contributions to employee pensions	6,165	6,165
Total	<u>33,068</u>	<u>32,534</u>

There is one part-time member of staff at the BAPG responsible for the day-to-day running of operations. A non-consolidated bonus in line with payments made to House of Commons staff increased the 'Wages and Salaries' cost in 2012-13.

4. Other Administration Costs

	2012-13		2011-12	
	£	£	£	£
Non-cash items				
Auditors' remuneration and expenses:				
Audit Fee	5,000		5,000	
Total non-cash items		5,000		5,000
Cash Items				
Sundry	509		1,615	
Insurance	2,011		1,679	
Annual Report	700		1,255	
Website	401		905	
		3,621		5,454
Grand Total		8,621		10,454

There was a significant reduction (down 44%) in the cost of printing the 2011-12 Annual Report compared to the previous year due to a change of printer. In addition, a large accrual from the previous year for website hosting services (owing to outstanding invoices) brought the 2012-13 in-year costs down significantly (by 56%).

5. Programme Expenditure

	2012-13	2011-12
	£	£
Annual Conferences	39	45,162
Special Delegation Visits	11,218	15,395
Republican/ Democratic Convention	17,098	0
Co-Sponsored Visits	17,662	25,791
Reception for American Ambassador	0	3,401
Carbon Offsetting of Air Travel	400	515
New Members of Parliament Orientation (NMOP)	11,026	0
Hospitality	404	386
Total	57,847	90,650

The decrease in Programme Expenditure (down 36% on the previous year) was in the main due to the 2012 Annual Parliamentary Congressional Conference not taking place and in part due to the American Ambassador not being able to attend the annual BAPG reception. The 2012 Annual Parliamentary / Congressional Conference did not take place principally because the House of Representatives' Speaker had not appointed a House BAPG delegation since the mid-term elections in 2010, when the Republican Party took control of the House. This was further complicated by the debt ceiling debates and general election in the U.S. Consequently, the budget holders on behalf of the House of Commons and House of Lords gave their agreement in January 2013 for the BAPG to carry forward the sum allocated for the 2012 Annual Conference (£38,000).

6. Financial instruments

IFRS 7 (Financial Instruments: Disclosures) requires disclosure of the role which financial instruments have had during the period in creating or changing the risks an entity faces in undertaking its activities. The BAPG has limited exposure to risk in relation to its activities.

Liquidity risk

The BAPG was financed by a grant from grant in-aid from both Houses of Parliament. As such it was not exposed to significant liquidity risks.

Interest rate risk

The BAPG was not exposed to significant interest rate risk.

Foreign currency risk

Foreign currency would not usually form part of the Group's assets or liabilities and as such it is not exposed to any significant exchange risks.

7. Trade receivables and other current assets

	<u>31 Mar 2013</u>	<u>31 Mar 2012</u>
	£	£
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Accrued Income	0	108
Prepayments	3,696	980
	<u>3,696</u>	<u>1,088</u>

The significant increase in trade receivables is primarily due to the pre-payment of a deposit to secure a venue for the 2013 Annual Conference (£2,490).

8. Cash and cash equivalents

	<u>£</u>
Balance at 1 Apr 2011	77,626
Net change in cash and cash equivalent balances	(16,584)
Balance at 31 Mar 2012	61,042
Net change in cash and cash equivalent balances	(9,634)
Balance at 31 Mar 2013	51,408
	<u>£</u>
The following balances at 31 March were held at:	
	<u>£</u>
Commercial bank and cash in hand	<u>51,408</u>
	<u>61,042</u>

9. Trade payables and other current liabilities

	<u>31 Mar 2013</u>	<u>31 Mar 2012</u>
	£	£
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Accruals	1,693	15,066
Deferred Income	233	208
	<u>1,926</u>	<u>15,274</u>

The significant decrease in trade payables is due to accruals returning to normal after a significant accrual in 2011-12 relating to flights for a BAPG specialist delegation visit to the United States at the end of March 2012.

10. Losses and special payments

There were no losses and special payments in 2012-13.

11. Related-party transactions

The House of Commons and the House of Lords are regarded as related parties, providing Grant in Aid to the Group under the terms provided in the Financial Memorandum. In addition the House of Commons provides free accommodation to the Group.

During 2012-13 the Group entered into related party transactions worth £9,769:

- £6,165 was paid into the House of Commons Staff Pension Scheme on behalf of the Group Administrator;
- £2,721 was paid to House of Commons Catering and Retail Services;
- £883 was reimbursed to the BAPG Administrator in respect of purchases made on behalf of BAPG during the year.

Other than these related party transactions, no member of the Group or any other related party has undertaken any material transactions with the Group during the year. A Remuneration Report is not required as Members of the Group Executive Committee are unpaid.

Activities of the Group

16th April

The National Audit Office (NAO) commenced its audit of the BAPG 2011-2012 Accounts.

25th April

The BAPG Honorary Secretary and Joint Honorary Treasurer, The Rt. Hon. John Spellar, MP, together with Geoffrey Clifton-Brown, MP hosted former HM British Ambassador to the United States, Sir Nigel Sheinwald, to lunch at the House of Commons to personally thank him for his support of the BAPG and its activities. The BAPG also arranged for Sir Nigel to attend PMQs that day which he greatly enjoyed. It was a useful meeting at which Sir Nigel offered advice on how to move forward the appointment of a new chair to the House BAPG by the House of Representatives Speaker so that preparations may commence on the arrangements for the 2012 Annual Parliamentary / Congressional Conference.

1st May

At the request of the North America Team at the Foreign Office, the BAPG arranged a lunch in the House for four rising political stars from Florida visiting London on a Foreign Office sponsored programme. The BAPG also invited to the lunch four young politicians from UK government and opposition parties who had recently been selected to accompany four MPs on a BAPG / U.S. Department of State co-sponsored visit to the U.S. to learn about the U.S. election process and observe firsthand the Primary elections on June 5th. The lunch was hosted by Joint Honorary Treasurer, the Rt. Hon. John Spellar, MP, who was joined by Executive Committee member, Jack Lopresti, MP. The Foreign Office covered the cost of the lunch, which was reported to have been a great success.

2nd May

The BAPG made arrangements for four rising political stars from Florida participating in a FCO sponsored visit to observe PMQs from the Distinguished Visitors Gallery by kind permission of the Speaker.

15th May

A meeting of the BAPG Executive Committee took place.

23rd May

The BAPG held a pre-departure briefing meeting for participants of the BAPG / U.S. Department of State co-sponsored visit to the U.S. to learn about the U.S. election process and observe firsthand the Republican Primary in South Dakota. The BAPG Honorary Secretary, Brian Donohoe, MP, chaired the meeting and was joined by the Administrator and representatives from the U.S. Embassy's Cultural Affairs and Political Sections.

28th May

At the request of the North America Department at the Foreign Office, the Administrator met with Dan Pasquini, Head of Press at the post in Los Angeles

30th May

At the request of the British Embassy, the BAPG arranged a tour of Parliament for Senator David Vitter (R-Louisiana), a member of the Foreign Relations Committee. We are grateful to the Rt. Hon John Spellar, MP for kindly giving the time to show Senator Vitter round Parliament.

30 May

At the request of the Strategic Relations Management Unit at UK Trade & Investment, the BAPG made arrangements for two North American VIP guests to be given a tour of Parliament.

31st May

The Deputy Chief of Mission of the United States of America hosted a reception in honour of Environmentalist Majora Carter who spoke on Urban Renewal and Sustainable Cities to which members of the Executive and others were invited.

2-9 June

Four MPs together with four rising political stars from related parties travelled to the U.S. to learn about the U.S. election process and observe firsthand the Republican Primaries in South Dakota on June 5th as well as attend general election events in the state. The BAPG funded the cost of the transatlantic flights, hotel accommodation and daily subsistence for the four MPs and the U.S. Department of State covered the entire cost of the four up and coming political leaders as well as arrange all internal travel for the delegation and the programme.

7th June

At the request of the House of Commons Overseas Office, the BAPG made arrangements for a member of the U.S. Defense Department and a senior advisor to the U.S. Congress to be shown round Parliament.

11th June

Lord Hannay, member of the BAPG Executive Committee, met with three U.S. Representatives – Representative Loretta Sanchez (D-CA), Representative Phil Gingrey, (R-GA) and Representative Michael Turner (R-OH) to discuss global security and non proliferation.

12th June

The BAPG in conjunction with the U.S. Embassy held a Parliamentary discussion and reception on the 2012 U.S. Elections in the Attlee Suite, Portcullis House. The event was moderated by Emily Maitlis of BBC TV News (Newsnight) with speakers: Celina Lake, President, Lake Research: one of the Democratic Party's leading political strategists; Ed Goetas, President & CEO, the Tarrance Group: one of the most respected Republican survey research and strategy teams in the U.S. and Peter Kellner, President of YouGov.

The event was very well attended by MPs, Peers and staff together with guests from the Foreign Office, academia, think tanks, the economy and business.

12th June

At the request of the British Embassy, the BAPG arranged a tour of Parliament for ex House Speaker / Presidential candidate Newt Gingrich's daughter and granddaughter.

13th June

The BAPG arranged tickets to PMQs for a Senior Fellow of the U.S. House of Representatives, Mallory Factor, and family.

18th June

At the request of the North America Team at the Foreign Office, the BAPG made arrangements for former U.S. Senator Russ Feingold to visit Parliament. Senator Feingold had recently published a new book "While America Sleeps: A Wake-Up Call for the Post-9/11 Era". He was Senator for Wisconsin from 1993-2011 and was the only Democrat who had voted to impeach Bill Clinton and one of the few Senators to vote against Iraq. We are very grateful to Andy Love for giving the time to meet with Senator Feingold who was accompanied by Helen Teasdale, Acting Head of Department and Head of U.S. Strategy, in the North America Department at the FCO.

18th June

The Administrator met with Andrea Coker, Deputy Director Conservative Friends of America, to discuss the two groups and possible areas of co-operation.

18th June

At the request of the North America Department at the Foreign Office, the BAPG made arrangements for a delegation from Cherokee Nation to visit Parliament. Their visit to the UK was to mark 250 years of the "Emissaries of Peace" journey to London in 1762 and the signing of the 1730 Treaty of Whitehall between King George II and the Cherokee Nation. The visit was also to develop business connections in the UK with companies that would have an interest in doing business with the largest native American tribe in the U.S. (with a budget of \$1.5 billion dollars). We are most grateful to Executive Committee member Michael Dugher, MP for showing the delegation round Parliament and to the Speaker and his office for hosting the delegation to tea in the Speaker's State Rooms.

18th June

Robert Hannigan, Director General Defence and Intelligence, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, hosted a reception to say farewell to Angus Lapsley, Director Americas, and to welcome his successor, Kate Smith, at the Foreign Office to which the Honorary Secretary, Administrator and others were invited.

25th June

The BAPG Honorary Secretary and Administrator met with the new Political Counselor at the British Embassy, James Kariuki, to brief him on the BAPG and its activities. The post of Political Counselor assists the BAPG in arranging programmes/meetings for BAPG delegations visiting Washington D.C.

26th June

The BAPG arranged a tour of Parliament for a small group of American exchange students from Viewpoint College in Los Angeles who were on an exchange with Queens College, Taunton.

26th June

A "Hats Off and Farewell" reception took place for the outgoing Deputy Cultural Attache at the U.S. Embassy, Kate Bentley, to which the Administrator and others were invited.

27th June

The Administrator met with U.S State Trooper David Startup to discuss the logistics for the forthcoming visit to Parliament by the Governor of Washington State, Christine Gregoire (Democrat).

1st July

The Ambassador of the United States of America and Mrs. Marjorie Susman hosted an American Independence Day Picnic at Winfield House to which the Honorary Secretary, Administrator, and others were invited.

4th July

The John Adams Society (The Alumni Association for U.S. Embassy Exchange Programmes for England and Wales) held a 4th July Independence Day party at The Dickens Inn, St. Katherine Dock, to which Officers and members of the BAPG Executive Committee were invited.

4th July

At the request of the U.S. Embassy, the BAPG arranged tickets to PMQs for the new Political Counsellor, Toby Bradley, and guest.

9th July

The University of Southern California Alumni Club of London hosted a breakfast briefing with the Dean of the USC Sol Price School of Public Policy, Jack H Knott, on the 2012 U.S. Elections at the Oxford and Cambridge Club to which Officers and Members of the BAPG Executive Committee were invited. Dean Knott spoke on the extreme polarization of US politics, this election's decisive issues, the impact Europe has on US politics and the outcome the election may have on Europe.

11 July

At the request of the Vice Consul, Head of West Coast Politics, Robin Newman, the BAPG made arrangements for the Governor of Washington State, Christine Gregoire (Democrat), and accompanying guests visiting the UK on a trade promotion tour centered around the Farnborough air show, to be given a tour of Parliament and watch PMQs from the gallery of the House of Commons chamber.

We are most grateful to Baroness Scott of Needham Market for conducting the tour and to Mr. Speaker for so kindly giving four tickets to PMQs.

11th July

At the request of the North America Team at the Foreign Office, the BAPG arranged tickets to PMQs for the Governor of Florida, Rick Scott (Republican) and accompanying delegation also in the UK to attend the Farnborough air show. We are grateful to Greg Hands, MP for formally welcoming Governor Scott and guests at Parliament together with the BAPG Honorary Secretary.

11th July

At the request of the British Consulate General Miami, the BAPG arranged a tour of Parliament and tickets to the galleries of both Houses for the Mayor of Jacksonville, Florida, Alvin Brown.

11th July

The group's Annual General Meeting took place.

12th July

The Consul General of the British Consulate General Miami, Kevin McGurgan, briefed Michael McCann, MP and Mark Pritchard, MP's researcher (in the absence of Mark who had to attend a constituency engagement) prior to their departure to attend the Republican National Convention.

17th July

A pre-departure meeting took place with the participants of the 2012 BAPG / U.S. Department of State Co-Sponsored Visit to the United States, 22-31 July. The BAPG Honorary Secretary chaired the meeting and was joined by the Administrator and representatives from the Cultural Affairs and Political sections of the U.S. Embassy.

18th July

The BAPG arranged a tour of the Capitol and the White House for the son of Lord Maxton who was over in Washington D.C. on honeymoon. We are most grateful to Congressman Tom Petri's office (Republican, Wisconsin) for making the special arrangements.

22nd July to 1st August.

Six MPs (in place of the usual eight, reduced as a result of the cut to the BAPG's funding) visited the U.S. to learn about the U.S. political system. They spent five days in Washington D.C. gaining an overview of the federal system of government, two days in individual districts with Members of Congress and two days in Boston to examine a state capital legislature.

The BAPG funded the transatlantic flights, hotel accommodation and daily subsistence. The U.S. Department of State funded the internal flights, ground transport and again arranged the programme.

1st August

At the request of the North America Team at the Foreign Office, the BAPG arranged a tour of Parliament for two U.S. citizens who had previously competed in the Olympics, in 1948 and 1972.

24th August

At the request of the Director of Endeavour Public Affairs (EPA), Richard Hyslop, BAPG Executive Committee member, Austin Mitchell, MP, wrote an article on the 2012 U.S. Presidential Elections for the "Expert Opinion" section of the EPA website.

27-30 August

Two members (Government and Opposition) attended the Republican National Convention in Tampa, Florida to see Presidential candidate selection. Representatives from all 50 U.S. states attended the Conventions.

The British Embassy kindly arranged the MPs credentials to the Convention and participation in the programmes running alongside the Convention which comprised seminars on domestic politics and policy and international affairs.

3-6 September

Two members (Government and Opposition) attended the Democratic National Convention in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Again the British Embassy arranged credentials for the MPs to the Convention and participation in the International Leaders Forum running alongside the Convention.

The Opposition member attending the Republican Convention and the Government member attending the Democratic Convention both wrote articles for the House Magazine on the respective Conventions.

11th September

At the request of the British Consulate General San Francisco, the BAPG made arrangements for a delegation from the California State Senate to visit Parliament. The party were given a tour followed by a round table discussion with five MPs on a range of subjects including High Speed Rail, aviation and energy policy. The BAPG is grateful to the Rt. Hon. John Spellar, MP; Geoffrey Clifton-Brown, MP; Austin Mitchell, MP; Stephen Williams, MP and Andy Love, MP for giving the time to meet the delegation. It was a very interesting and useful discussion.

12th September

At the request of the British Consulate General Chicago, the BAPG arranged a tour and tickets to PMQs for two Congressional contacts of the post.

12th September

The Minister of the Embassy of the United States of America, Ms. Barbara Stephenson, hosted a reception to welcome Mr. Mark Tokola, Minister Counselor for Political Affairs, to which the Honorary Secretary and others were invited.

12th September

A report back meeting took place with the participants of the 2012 Annual BAPG / U.S. Department of State Co-Sponsored Visit to the United States. Brian Donohoe, MP chaired the meeting and was joined by the Administrator and representatives of the Cultural Affairs and Political Section at the U.S. Embassy.

19th September

At the request of Jonathan Djanogly, MP, the BAPG arranged a tour of the White House for a constituent via Representative John Campbell's Office (Republican/California), Chair of the UK Caucus in the House of Representatives.

20th September

The BAPG made arrangements for the annual intake of Marshall Scholars to be given a tour of Parliament and meet with BAPG Joint Honorary Treasurer, the Rt. Hon. John Spellar, MP for a question and answer exchange. We are most grateful to John Spellar for the time he gives in support of the BAPG and its affairs.

20th September

In honour of the Marshall Scholars, Jeremy Brown, MP, Minister of State for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, hosted an evening reception in Durbar Court at the Foreign Office to which members of the BAPG Executive Committee and Administrator were invited.

25th September

At the request of the office of Congressman John Campbell (R-CA), Co-Chair of the UK Caucus, the BAPG arranged a tour of Parliament for constituent Anna Winship.

25th September

At the request of the North America Team at the Foreign Office, the BAPG arranged a tour of Parliament for three close contacts of U.S. Representative Mike Capuano (Democrat – Massachusetts).

26th September

Tom Leary, Minister Counselor for Public Affairs at the U.S. Embassy, hosted a reception at the Embassy to bid farewell to Karen Huntress and Sharlina Hussain-Morgan, outgoing Assistant Cultural Attaches, and to welcome Jamie Martin, Deputy Cultural Attaché and Robert Adelson and Michael Prosser, incoming Assistant Cultural Attaches, to which the Administrator was invited.

28th September

The BAPG assisted Oregon State Senator Diane Rosenbaum (Democrat) in booking a commercial tour of Parliament.

3rd October

The Administrator met with the North America Team at the Foreign Office to discuss the BAPG and its programme going forward.

10th October

The BAPG arranged a tour of the White House for a constituent of Brian Donohoe, MP's, via Representative Tim Petri, (Republican/Wisconsin), former Chair of the House BAPG.

13th October

The BAPG assisted an Eisenhower Fellowships Alumnus in arranging a dinner at the House of Commons for the Eisenhower Fellowships alumni which coincided with Eisenhower Day. We are most grateful to David Watts, MP for sponsoring the dinner and formally welcoming the party to Parliament on behalf of the BAPG.

17th October

The BAPG Officers hosted Angus Lapsley's successor, Kate Smith, the new Foreign Office Director of Americas, to lunch at the House of Commons. The Officers briefed Kate on the BAPG and its activities and discussed possible collaborative projects going forward. Prior to her current appointment at the Foreign Office Kate was Head of UK Government Relations at Shell and has a particular interest in energy and climate change policy.

17th October

The BAPG assisted the House of Commons Overseas Office with arrangements for a visit to Parliament by a delegation of senior officers from the U.S. House of Representatives who wished to look at legislative and institutional procedure. The BAPG arranged for the delegation to attend PMQs and BAPG Officers Brian Donohoe and John Spellar met the party at a reception hosted by the Clerk of the House, Robert Rogers, at his residence in their honour. The BAPG is extremely grateful to the Principal Door Keeper and the Senior Door Keeper in charge of the galleries for accommodating the party when the galleries were already full for PMQs that day.

18th October

The Ambassador of the United States of America & PBS America hosted an exclusive preview screening of 'The Choice 2012' at the U.S. Embassy followed by a panel discussion chaired by Bronwen Maddox, Editor, Prospect Magazine, with Douglas Alexander, MP and Brooks Newmark, MP on the U.S. Presidential elections, to which members of the BAPG Executive Committee and others were invited.

23rd October

A meeting of the BAPG Executive Committee took place.

29th October

The BAPG, in conjunction with the U.S. Embassy, held a Parliamentary discussion and reception on the 2012 U.S. Elections. Austin Mitchell, MP, was joined by Anne Applebaum, American Journalist and Director of Politics at the Legatum Institute, in discussion with Dr. Larry Sabato, via video conference, eminent American political scientist and analyst.

It was a very successful evening, despite initial technical difficulties, with many members attending along with guests from the Foreign Office, academia, think tanks and business.

6th November

The U.S. Presidential and Congressional elections took place. The Ambassador of the United States of America and Mrs. Louis B Susman hosted an election night party at the Embassy attended by the BAPG Officers and others.

6th November

CNN also held an election night party at a venue close to the U.S. Embassy. All Officers and members of the BAPG Executive Committee were invited to attend.

7th November

Chatham House hosted a panel discussion on the outcome of the U.S. Election and what it would mean for U.S. domestic and foreign policy. The BAPG Honorary Secretary and others were invited to attend.

7th November

The Ditchley Foundation hosted a panel discussion in the House of Lords on the future direction of U.S. foreign policy to which the Honorary Secretary and others were invited.

12th November

The Administrator met with representatives of PBS UK, a television channel from America's Public Broadcasting Service, to discuss possible areas of co-operation.

13th November

The Honorary Secretary and Administrator went before the Finance and Services Committee to make the case for additional funding in 2013/2014.

19th November

The BAPG had great pleasure in hosting the Mayor of San Antonio, Julian Castro, together with leaders of San Antonio based IT and Energy companies who were visiting the UK on a Foreign Office sponsored trade visit. Julian Castro is the 37 year old Mayor of the U.S.' seventh largest city. He is widely tipped for a future leadership role within the United States and made the keynote speech at this year's Democratic National Convention.

The Honorary Secretary gave the Mayor and guests a tour of Parliament which was followed by lunch in the Speaker's State Rooms hosted by Mr. Speaker, as Joint President of the BAPG, with officers and members of the BAPG together with the chairs of several Select Committees. The British Consulate General wrote afterwards that it was a great success and was very much enjoyed and appreciated by the Mayor and accompanying business leaders.

19th November

The new Foreign Office Director of Americas, Kate Smith, hosted a reception that same evening for Mayor Castro and accompanying business leaders at the Foreign Office to which members of the BAPG Executive Committee were invited amongst others.

27th & 28th November

At the request of the FCO, the BAPG arranged a visit to Parliament for five Press and Public Affairs Officers from posts across the United States as part of their induction programme with the Foreign Office. The visit comprised a tour of Parliament, tickets to PMQs and a briefing meeting with the Clerk of the House of Commons Overseas Office, Crispin Poyser, on the UK Parliamentary system.

11th December

A meeting of the BAPG Executive Committee took place.

11-14 December

Four members attended as observers the Harvard University orientation programme for newly elected Members of Congress. The programme was conducted by the Institute of Politics at the John F Kennedy School of Government and all new Members of Congress as elected on 6th November were invited to attend. The programme involved 'issue seminars' and lectures by Harvard academics and eminent outside speakers. One of the participants, Gregg McClymont, MP, wrote a piece on the programme for The House Magazine.

12th December

A report back meeting took place with participants of the BAPG / U.S. Department of State Co-Sponsored 'election' visit to the U.S. in June when four MPs and four young politicians of related parties travelled to the U.S. to learn about the U.S. election process and observe firsthand the Republican Primaries in South Dakota.

12th December

The Ambassador of the United States of America and Mrs. Louis B. Susman hosted a Christmas Drinks party at Winfield House which was attended by the BAPG Honorary Secretary and others.

17th December

The BAPG hosted a post 2012 U.S. Elections briefing and Q&A with Foreign Office Minister Alistair Burt. Mr. Burt briefed members on what the outcome of the U.S. elections means for the UK and the Government's priorities for its engagement with the new Administration.

8th January 2013

The BAPG Administrator met with the North America Programme Administrator of Chatham House, Rory Kinane, to discuss the possibility of closer co-operation which may comprise sharing information on possible U.S. speakers visiting London and occasional joint discussion events.

9th January

At the request of the University of Texas at Austin, the BAPG arranged a tour of Parliament for students visiting London.

11th January

The American Ambassador, Louis B Susman, and Twentieth Century Fox hosted an advance screening of the film 'Lincoln' at the Twentieth Century Fox offices on Soho Square to which the BAPG Honorary Secretary and others were invited.

13th January

The Administrator met with Shailesh Vara, MP, a participant of the recent Harvard visit, to hear feedback on the visit. Mr. Vara was also keen to learn more about the BAPG and its activities.

16th January

The Administrator met with the Harvard Director of Internships, Amy Howell, who was over in London arranging the latest internship programme including placements with several MPs. There was discussion of a forthcoming visit to London by the Director of the Institute of Politics at Harvard, Trey Grayson, together with the BAPG's key contact for the Harvard New Members programme, Christian Flynn, in June. The Administrator offered to put together a programme for a visit to Parliament.

21st January

The Administrator met with Alison Groves, a Parliamentary Clerk, who was seeking information from across the House on behalf of Robert Rogers on travel and subsistence practices. The purpose of which is to map out differing travel practices across different parts of the House and the wider Parliamentary family so as to be able to assess the potential (if any) risks. It has been stressed by the Clerk of the House of Commons Overseas Office that "there is no plan to insist on changing the practices of the most generous unit to the practice of the most restrictive."

22nd January

The American Embassy invited the BAPG Executive to an ERA Foundation International Lecture by Dr. Shirley Ann Jackson, a member of President Obama's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology, titled: "Clouds, Crowds, Jams and Data: A New Polytechnic to Address Global Challenges" held at the Royal Academy of Engineering.

28th January

At the request of the British Consulate General San Francisco, the BAPG arranged a tour of Parliament for representatives from the City of San Francisco and America's Cup organisation who were visiting the UK on a Foreign Office sponsored visit to learn best practices from the Olympic Legacy team on hosting large scale global events.

28th January

The BAPG arranged a tour and tickets to the House of Commons gallery for former U.S. Senator Rudy Boschwitz (Republican, Minnesota) and family.

29th January

The BBC invited the BAPG Honorary Secretary and others to a recording of the 37th Richard Dimbleby Lecture given by Mr. Bill Gates, philanthropist and Co-Chair of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

The BAPG Secretariat has arranged several tours of the Capitol and the White House for Members of Parliament and guests of MPs visiting Washington D.C. The BAPG is extremely grateful to the offices of Representatives Tom Petri and John Campbell for facilitating the tours.

5th February

Participants of the recent Harvard bi-partisan programme for newly elected Members of Congress were invited to report back on the programme. Members reported a very useful programme at which good contacts were made with some of the 50 new Members of Congress Members who attended.

5th February

A meeting of the BAPG Executive Committee took place.

8th February

The John Adams Society jointly hosted with the U.S. Embassy the second European Network of American Alumni Associations (the umbrella organisation for the American Exchange Alumni organisations) conference at the House of Commons. The Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons, Nigel Evans, MP, presided. The conference featured several high level political speakers and panellists from the UK and US and addressed such issues as “strengthening the UK-US alliance” and “overcoming the anti American sentiment in Europe”. All BAPG Alumni who were members of the John Adams Society were welcome to attend free of charge.

13th February

Chatham House invited Officers and Members of the BAPG to a meeting of its U.S. Discussion Group at which Max Boot, Jeane J. Kirkpatrick Senior Fellow in National Security Studies at the Council on Foreign Relations, spoke on ‘The History and Future of Guerrilla Warfare’ chaired by Xenia Dormandy, Senior Fellow, Chatham House.

20th February

The Administrator met with the Director Parliament and Companies Act Audits of the National Audit Office, Mr. Bryan Ingleby, together with Lead Auditor, Sara Hesketh, to discuss the timetable for this year’s audit of the BAPG accounts. It was agreed that the NAO would audit the BAPG accounts the week commencing 15th April.

27th February

At the request of the U.S. Embassy, the BAPG arranged two tickets to PMQs for the Embassy’s Political Counselor and guest. We are most grateful to Mr. Speaker and his office for the tickets.

1st March

At the request of the British Embassy, the BAPG arranged a tour of Parliament for the daughter of Congressman Eric Cantor, the House Majority Whip, and friends. We are extremely grateful to Visitor Services for accommodating the tour with less than 24 hours notice.

11-12 March

The Administrator attended an FCO internal course titled ‘Understanding U.S. Foreign Policy’ with a view to recommending a potted version for Members of Parliament, co-sponsored with the FCO. The Administrator has had positive feedback to the idea from the North America Team and the BAPG Officers and will further explore it.

15th March

Chatham House invited members of the BAPG to a private breakfast roundtable discussion with former Massachusetts Senator Scott Brown who was to speak about the future of the Republican Party in the U.S.

18th March

At the request of the Foreign Office, the BAPG arranged a tour of Parliament and a meeting with the Lead Clerk on the Business, Innovations and Skills Committee for a U.S. Congressional delegation of senior Senate staff who were visiting the UK on a Foreign Office sponsored visit to look at the UK’s trade and business agenda and its approach to encouraging a private sector led economic recovery.

18th March

The Eccles Centre for American Studies at the British Library hosted the 2013 Sulgrave Manor Watson Chair Lecture by Professor Richard Carwardine, world-renowned expert on Abraham Lincoln and President of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, titled “Abraham Lincoln, Irish Americans and the

U.S. Civil War". All Officers and Members of the BAPG Executive Committee were invited to attend the event held at the British Library Conference Centre.

18th March

Chatham House extended an invitation to members of the BAPG to a private lunch roundtable discussion with former Member of Congress, Jane Harman, Director of the Woodrow Wilson International Centre for Scholars. Ms. Harman was to speak about Obama's Foreign Policy Agenda and how he will implement it.

18th March

The Foreign Secretary hosted a reception to welcome progress towards the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) to which the BAPG officers and others were invited. The BAPG Administrator assisted the North America Team with the Parliament related invitations.

19th March

The BAPG Honorary Secretary and the Administrator met with Mr. Jeffries Briginshaw, the new Managing Director of British American Business, to discuss the work of the BAB and possible areas of co-operation. It was a most useful meeting and Mr. Briginshaw provided a valuable insight in to the negotiations around the proposed transatlantic free trade agreement.

21st March

The BAPG Administrator met with the U.S. Team Leader of the North America Department at the Foreign Office, Mr. Tom Soper, to discuss the BAPG's bid to the Foreign Office Superfund to fund a Transatlantic Trade & Investment Partnership (TTIP) related visit to the United States; the aim of which is to build awareness and understanding of the proposed transatlantic free trade agreement and the scale of opportunity for UK trade and investment among British Members of Parliament.

Report on the Work of the Group during 2012-2013

The Annual General Meeting of the Group took place on 11th July 2012. The Deputy Speaker kindly presided in the absence of the Speaker who was detained in the chamber.

It was reported that the Group's membership stood at 651 and that between April 2011 and April 2012 25 members had visited the United States under the Group's auspices.

During the 12 months to April 2013, 18 members had visited the United States. This number would have been higher had the 2012 Annual Parliamentary Congressional Conference taken place in the U.S. with the House of Representatives BAPG. However, it wasn't possible to arrange due to the House Speaker Representative John Boehner not having appointed a BAPG delegation since the Republicans took control of the House at the 2010 mid-term elections. This was further complicated by the debt ceiling debates through 2012 and the general election in the U.S.

However, in spite of this, 18 Members had been to the United States during the twelve months to April 2013 by way of the following visits:

- In June, the BAPG in collaboration with the U.S. Department of State and U.S. Embassy, sent four MPs accompanied by four rising political stars from related parties to the U.S. to learn about the U.S. election process and observe firsthand the Republican primary in South Dakota on 5th June. The U.S. Department of State funded the cost of the four rising political stars to participate in the programme as well as all internal travel for the MPs and the cost of the programme.
- In July, six members went to the United States, again in conjunction with the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Embassy, to learn about the U.S. political system. The MPs spent the first five days in Washington D.C. looking at the federal system of government, the middle weekend with Members of Congress in their Congressional districts and the final two days in Boston to learn something of the state system of government.
- In August two members (Government and Opposition) attended the Republican National Convention in Tampa, Florida, to see Presidential candidate selection. The following month, two members (again one Government and one Opposition members) attended the Democratic National Convention in Charlotte, North Carolina.
- In December four members attended as observers the Harvard bi-partisan orientation programme for newly elected Members of Congress conducted by the Institute of Politics. It provided a valuable opportunity for the MPs to engage with 50 new Members of Congress and to learn about the prevailing issues in U.S. public policy via seminars and lectures by prominent scholars and practitioners.

Over the year, the BAPG has been able to arrange lunches for visiting VIPs from the United States and various tours of both Houses at the request of the Foreign Office, the American Embassy or directly from the offices of U.S. legislators. Arrangements were also made for the 2012 Marshall Scholars to visit Parliament and to meet with a Member of Parliament for a question and answer exchange.

Unfortunately, it was not possible to arrange the annual BAPG reception for the American Ambassador and senior Embassy staff due to the Ambassador's extensive commitments in a U.S. election year.

Contact with the United States Embassy in London has been well maintained throughout the year and a significant part of our programme is dependent on good liaison with both the U.S. Embassy and the Foreign Office. Our extensive thanks are due to the North America Department at the Foreign Office for the very informative briefings which they are always kind enough to provide for BAPG delegations and to the British Embassy in Washington D.C. and the Consulates across the USA for their very great input in to the programmes arranged for our delegations. We are grateful for all their very considerable help that they give to the BAPG thereby enabling us to maintain our programme from year to year.

We are also extremely grateful to members who kindly provide gallery tickets or Special Permits for visiting Americans.

Group membership now stands at 644 with 366 members drawn from the House of Commons and 278 from the House of Lords. The slight fall in number from the previous year is mainly due to members standing down from Parliament and members passing away.

Members may wish to be reminded that information about the Group's forthcoming activities is not usually sent out individually but can be found on the All Party Whip from time to time.

Members who need further information should telephone 020 7219 6209 or fax 020 7219 5972. The Group's office is at 7 Millbank, London SW1P 3JA.

The Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons, Lindsay Hoyle, MP, presided in the absence of the Speaker, the Rt. Hon. John Bercow, MP, whose presence was required in the chamber.

1. Apologies

The Chairman conveyed apologies for absence from the Prime Minister, the Foreign Secretary, the Leader of the Opposition, the BAPG Joint Honorary Treasurer, the Rt. Hon. Greg Knight, MP, together with 31 others.

2. Minutes of the last Meeting

The Minutes of the last meeting, having been circulated, were approved and signed as a true record.

3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

4. To Receive the Annual Report from the Executive Committee for April 2011 to April 2012 and the Accounts for the Year Ending 31st March 2012

The Opposition Vice Chairman, The Rt. Hon. Shaun Woodward, MP, was called upon to present the report of the Executive Committee for 2011/2012.

Mr. Woodward first thanked the Deputy Speaker for presiding at the Group's AGM at short notice. He then reported on the work of the Group during the period April 2011 to April 2012. He reminded members that full details of all the Group's activities appeared in the printed report which had been circulated before the AGM. The report on the work of the group could be found in particular on pages 29-32.

During the 12 months from April 2011 to April 2012, 25 Members of Parliament had visited the United States under the Group's auspices.

The 25 members who went to the States were sent by means of:

- The 2011 Annual Parliamentary / Congressional Conference which took place in the U.S. in July at the invitation of the Senate BAPG. 13 Members of Parliament met with six Senators in Washington D.C. at the height of the debt limit debate. While in Washington D.C. the MPs also took the opportunity of meetings with Members of the House of Representatives, various departments of the Administration and think tanks, arranged by the British Embassy;
- Also in July, eight members participated in a U.S. Government sponsored voluntary visitor programme, run in conjunction with the BAPG, designed to give MPs an introduction to the American political system. The group visited Washington D.C., Minneapolis in Minnesota, and individual Congressional districts;
- In March 2012, the group sent a specialist delegation comprising four members to look at the U.S. economy, the effectiveness of the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and the prospects for economic policy given the U.S. political climate. The BAPG heard a broad range of views from the Administration, Congress, local officials, business people and think tanks.

Also in London, the Group had been able to arrange some meetings/tours/lunches for visiting U.S. Members of Congress/State legislators/other visiting U.S. VIPs and this is a part of the Group's role which we are always keen to expand and develop.

We are very grateful to the Speaker for kindly hosting a reception on behalf of the BAPG for the U.S. Ambassador, Louis B. Susman, in the Speaker's State Rooms in October 2011. Around 140 Members of the Group, together with 20 members of the U.S. Embassy, attended the reception.

The Group's complete list of activities for the year are shown on pages 23 to 28 in the Annual Report. They show the contribution the Group has made over the year to promoting good relations with the U.S. and the role which the Group has played in the programmes of American visitors.

Finally, Mr. Woodward paid tribute to the co-operation which the Group had received over the year from the American Embassy, particularly from the Political and Cultural Affairs Departments, and support has always been forthcoming from the Ambassador. The Group was also indebted to the North America Department at the FCO and to the British Embassy in Washington D.C. on whom a significant part of its programme is dependent. The British Embassy is particularly helpful when it comes to arranging meetings and other aspects of any programme for BAPG delegations to Washington D.C., as are the Consuls-General in other parts of the USA.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Woodward and invited a proposer and seconder to accept the Annual Report which was unanimously agreed.

The Chairman then called upon The Rt. Hon. John Spellar, MP, Joint Honorary Treasurer, to move the adoption of the Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2012. The Accounts had been circulated previously to members and appeared on pages 5 to 22 in the Annual Report.

Mr. Spellar reported that fellow Treasurer Greg Knight was otherwise engaged in the chamber on House business.

Mr. Spellar made the following points as regards the Accounts to March 31st 2012:

Cash and Bank

The group currently holds bank accounts with the Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS) and the National Westminster Bank (NatWest). Of the balance of £61,042 shown in the accounts; £58,147 was held with RBS and £2,895 with NatWest. Cash had decreased by £16,584 in the year. The components of this decrease are detailed in the cash flow statement on page 15 of the Accounts.

Operating Income/(Cost) after Interest & Tax

2010-11	£23,061
2011-12	(£32,880)

The net expenditure for 2011-12 was due to increased programme expenditure during the year. The Annual Parliamentary/Congressional Conference took place in the U.S. and we were delighted to have the Speaker host the Annual Reception for the American Ambassador in his state rooms. Both annual events had not previously taken place in 2010-2011.

Reserves Held (Net Assets)

31 March 2011	£74,736
31 March 2012	£46,856

As a result of a 10% reduction in the grant-in-aid figure (from £110k to £99k) and increased programme expenditure in 2011-12, the Group has seen its reserves decrease by 37.5% over the reporting year.

Significant Variations between 2010-11 and 2011-12

Expenditure

Administration

Administration costs decreased by 9% (£11,522 to £10,454). The increased costs in 2010-11 were due to the purchase of new computer equipment for the BAPG office at 7 Millbank. No hardware purchases were made during 2011-12.

Costs

Operating

Operating income decreased by 35% (£1,681 to £1,095) in 2011-12. This was due to a 6% decrease in Annual Subscriptions, a 91% decrease in Life Subscriptions and a 6% decrease in Donations (see note 2 for actual figures). Subscription income was lower in 2011-12 because 2010-11 was a General Election year which saw a change of Government.

Income

Staff

A 12% increase in social security costs was due to a return to typical annual expenditure for this area of staff costs. A rebate was received from HMRC during the previous financial year (2010-11) which reduced the actual costs incurred.

Costs

Going forward, Mr. Spellar reported that the grant paid to the BAPG for 2012-2013 had remained at the 2011-12 level of £99,000 (which itself had been cut 10% from a base line bid of £110,000 in 2010-2011) with no inflationary increase despite the BAPG bidding for additional funds. This was against a backdrop of rising programme costs (transatlantic flights, fuel, hotel accommodation..) in a Presidential and Congressional election year when we would expect to see an increased programme of activities.

The BAPG Officers had reverted to the House of Commons Commission and challenged the decision but the House of Commons Commission were not prepared to make an exception. As a result, the group is having to scale back the number of members participating across all visits over the year and will have to draw down on its Life Subscription reserves of £18,300 in order to fund this year's programme.

Mr. Spellar further reported that the House of Commons Commission and the House of Lords House Committee had given the responsibility of overseeing the funding arrangements of the BAPG and the other grant funded overseas inter-Parliamentary bodies to the Overseas Offices of both Houses and that there had been a tightening up of the financial relationship between the House of Commons Commission/House of Lords House Committee and the different grant funded bodies with the revision of the Financial Memorandum to require detailed and costed annual business plans, regular reports of outturn figures in relation to those plans, and limits on reserves as recommended by the Internal Audit.

It was reported group membership as of 8th July 2012 stood at 651 with 367 from the House of Commons and 284 from the House of Lords. 78% of members had a Life Subscription.

On behalf of the Officers, Mr. Spellar placed on record the Group's appreciation of the grant without which it would not be possible to maintain a programme.

The Chairman put to the meeting a formal motion to adopt the Accounts which was proposed and seconded and carried unanimously.

It was confirmed to Lord Anderson that the group would have to use most of its reserves to fund this year's programme leaving around £5, 000 and that the BAPG is expected to hold reserves of no more than one fourth of its annual funding.

5. To Ratify Vice-Presidents' & Officers Proposed by the Executive Committee

The Chairman announced that the Executive Committee had recommended that the following individuals should be re-elected as Vice-Presidents of the Group:

The Rt. Hon. Margaret Beckett, MP
The Rt. Hon. the Baroness Boothroyd, PC, OM
The Rt. Hon. the Lord Carrington, KG, GCMG, CH, MC, DL
The Rt. Hon. Nick Clegg, MP
The Rt. Hon. Iain Duncan Smith, MP
The Rt. Hon. the Lord Falconer of Thoroton, QC
The Rt. Hon. William Hague, MP
The Rt. Hon. the Lord Howard of Lympne, QC
The Rt. Hon. the Lord Howe of Aberavon, Kt, CH, QC
The Rt. Hon. the Lord Hurd of Westwell, CH, CBE
The Rt. Hon. the Lord Jopling, DL

The Rt. Hon. Charles Kennedy, MP
The Rt. Hon. the Lord Mackay of Clashfern, KT
The Rt. Hon. the Lord Martin of Springburn
The Rt. Hon. David Miliband, MP
The Rt. Hon. Ed Miliband, MP
The Rt. Hon. the Lord Molyneux of Killead, KBE
The Rt. Hon. the Lord Morris of Aberavon, KG, QC
The Rt. Hon. the Lord Owen, CH
The Rt. Hon. Jack Straw, MP
The Rt. Hon. the Baroness Thatcher, LG, OM

There was unanimous agreement to adopt these names.

The Chairman then paid warm tribute to those who had been Officers of the Group during 2011/2012:

The Rt. Hon. Dr. Liam Fox, MP, who had served as Government Vice Chair for two years, is to stand down from the role and the group would like to take this opportunity to thank him for his support of the group during this time.

The Rt. Hon. Shaun Woodward MP, Opposition Vice-Chairman, is also standing down having served the group in this role since October 2009. He has given the BAPG a great deal of his time and support over the years including chairing meetings and representing the group in negotiations with the Parliamentary authorities. The Group is enormously grateful to him for all that he has done and very much hope that he will continue to take an active interest in its activities.

The Executive Committee recommends that the following should become the new Vice-Chairs for a term of three years:

- the Rt. Hon. Andrew Mitchell, MP
- the Rt. Hon. Douglas Alexander, MP

Brian Donohoe, the Honorary Secretary, had completed his fourth year in that office which has a maximum term of eight years. The Group has been very fortunate to have such a hard working Honorary Secretary who gives an enormous amount of his time to the Group's affairs and members are delighted that he is happy to continue in his role.

The group is also extremely pleased that the Rt. Hon. Greg Knight, MP and The Rt. Hon. John Spellar, MP have agreed to continue as Joint Honorary Treasurers. They had both given a considerable amount of time to the Group's affairs and the hard work which they have done and continue to do is very much appreciated.

The ratification and election of the Chairman, the Joint Presidents, Vice-Presidents, the two Vice-Chairmen, the Honorary Secretary and the Honorary Treasurers was formally proposed and seconded and received the unanimous agreement of members present.

6. *To Elect 18 Members to serve on the Executive Committee 2012-13*

The Chairman reported that in accordance with Rule 8a, 18 Members were to be elected to the Executive Committee, consisting of 12 members from the House of Commons – of which there were to be six members from the Government Parties and six members from the Opposition Parties – and six members elected to represent the House of Lords, the proportion of which is determined by the Lord Speaker and the representatives of the parties and groups in that House. Accordingly, the Lord Speaker's office had confirmed the proportions as: two Conservatives; one Liberal Democrat; two Labour and one Cross Bench.

In relation to the election of members from the **House of Commons**, as the group had received only six nominations from the Government Parties for the Committee this year and only six nominations from the Opposition Parties for the Committee, the following members were elected unopposed to serve on the Executive Committee until the AGM in 2013:

House of Commons

Government

Christopher **Chope**, MP
Geoffrey **Clifton-Brown**, MP
Jack **Lopresti**, MP
Mark **Pritchard**, MP
The Rt. Hon. Sir John **Stanley**, MP
Stephen **Williams**, MP

Opposition

The Rt. Hon. Ann **Clwyd**, MP
Michael **Dugher**, MP
The Rt. Hon. Elyn **Llwyd**, MP
Andy **Love**, MP
Austin **Mitchell**, MP
David **Watts**, MP

Members present gave their unanimous agreement to the names.

In relation to the House of Lords, as the group had received the requisite number of nominations as there were places, the following members were elected unopposed to represent the House of Lords on the Executive Committee until the AGM in 2013:

Conservative

The Rt. Hon. the Lord **Trimble**
The Baroness **O’Cathain**, OBE

Liberal Democrat

The Baroness **Scott** of Needham Market

Labour

The Rt. Hon. the Lord **Anderson** of Swansea, DL
The Rt. Hon. the Lord **McFall** of Alcluith

Cross Bench

The Rt. Hon. the Lord **Fellowes** GCB GCVO QSO

The Chairman formally agreed these names with unanimous approval.

The group wished to pay tribute to the Rt. Hon. Hazel Blears, MP who had chosen not to stand for re-election to the Executive Committee. She had given generously of her time and we hope that she will continue to take an interest in the Group’s affairs.

7. Any Other Business

The Chairman gave apologies for Mr. Speaker who had hoped to be present but is in the chamber presiding at a debate on the hours of the House and reasonably members expect him to be there.

The Honorary Secretary thanked the Deputy Speaker for presiding at the Group’s AGM.

Mr. Donohoe reported:

- This year’s BAPG / U.S. Department of State Co-Sponsored visit to the United States is to take place from the 22nd to the 31st July. Six members (reduced from eight as a result of reduced programme expenditure) are to spend nine days in the United States examining the U.S. political system. The program will open in Washington, DC, followed by a weekend visit to individual congressional districts where the Members of Parliament will participate in local activities. The delegates will reunite in Boston where the program will focus on the structure of state and local government, politics and issues.

The U.S. Department of State organizes the programme and internal travel. The BAPG pays transatlantic air fares and a daily subsistence allowance including hotel accommodation.

- Two members (one Government and one Opposition) will attend each of the National Party Conventions in the U.S. later in the summer to see Presidential candidate selection.

Republican Convention, 27-30 August 2012, Tampa, Florida;
Democratic Convention, 3-6 September 2012, Charlotte, North Carolina.

Representatives from all 50 U.S. states attend the conventions including Members Congress.

The MPs are invited as guests of the party committees and are included in an International Leaders Forum which arranges access in to the conventions and to various seminars on domestic politics and policy and international affairs, which are attended by senior members of the party.

The conventions provide a unique opportunity for British Members of Parliament to make valuable contacts with federal and state legislatures and to gain an insight in to the party machine and prevailing policy issues.

- One week before the Americans go to the polls, the BAPG is to host a discussion, as part of its series of discussions on the 2012 U.S. Elections, with eminent U.S. political scientist and analyst, Dr. Larry Sabato, via video conference, on Monday, 29th October at 17:30 hours in the Attlee Suite, Portcullis House.

Dr. Sabato is one of the most respected political commentators in the U.S. The Wall Street Journal calls him 'probably the most quoted college professor in the land', and according to the Fox News Channel he is 'America's favourite political scientist'. A former Rhodes Scholar, and lecturer at Oxford University, he has produced an influential list of publications. In July 2008, Dr. Sabato correctly projected that Barack Obama would win the Presidency in a near-landslide. He predicted a 364-174 margin in the Electoral College, just one vote away from the final tally of 365-173, and he also forecast President Obama's exact 53% popular vote margin.

- At the invitation of the Institute of Politics at Harvard University, the group is to send two members (reduced from four), to observe an induction programme for newly elected Members of Congress to be held at the end of November / early December. The programme will involve issues seminars and lectures by Harvard academics and eminent outside speakers. All new Members of Congress as elected on the 6th November will be invited to attend. We will advertise the visit to members as soon as the dates have been confirmed.
- It is the turn of the House of Representatives BAPG to host the Annual Parliamentary / Congressional Conference this year in the U.S. although the full House BAPG delegation has still to be appointed by House Speaker John Boehner, including the Chair, whose office would ordinarily make the arrangements for the conference. The Chief of Staff to Congressman Tim Petri, a former Chair of the House BAPG, has said a possibility is that the House BAPG may propose the meetings take place after the Congressional elections on the 6th November and before the start of the lame duck session on 13th November. As soon as dates have been agreed the visit will be advertised to members.

The BAPG Secretariat is presently working with the U.S. Embassy to determine a date for the annual reception for the U.S. Ambassador. There has been discussion about the event possibly being held at the Ambassador's residence, Winfield House. As soon as a date has been agreed the event will be advertised to members.

The Honorary Secretary thanked the two outgoing Vice Chairs, Dr. Liam Fox and Shaun Woodward, and welcomed their successors Andrew Mitchell and Douglas Alexander. Appreciation was also recorded to fellow Officers, Greg Knight and John Spellar, and to the Administrator, Hannah.

The Honorary Secretary reported that the group continues to try to arrange lunches/meetings for Congressional delegations to London and other VIP visitors.

Finally, the Honorary Secretary reminded members that Group functions/visits are always advertised by means of the All Party Whip and the BAPG website www.bapg.org.uk. The BAPG is also increasingly using e-mail to alert members to BAPG events advertised on the APW.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 3.55 p.m.

