

Blackwater Valley Countryside Trust

Minutes of Annual General Meeting for Year Ending 30th September 2017

Held on 8th February 2018 from 7.30pm to 9.40pm

at Sandhurst Community Hall, Sandhurst, GU47 9BJ

PRESENT

Trustee Directors:

Mike Swaddling (Chairman)	(MS)	Catherine Morton	(CM)
Bernard Baverstock	(BB)	Alan Rolfe (Treasurer)	(AR)
Jane Biscombe	(JB)	Chris Smith	(CS)
Peter Collins	(PC)	Colin Wilson	(CW)
Mary Ferriss	(MF)		

Others

Steve Bailey (Secretary)	(SB)	Julie Hannington (Minutes)	(JH)
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APOLOGIES

David Murr	(DM)
Alan Taylor	(AT)

GUESTS

Cllr. Mrs. Hazel Hill (Mayor of Sandhurst) and her Consort	(MoS)
Edward Mayer (Speaker)	(EM)

Attendance: estimated to be 71 (includes guests, members and non-members, local groups and Trustees.)

NO.	ITEM	ACTION
-	CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MS opened the meeting and extended a warm welcome to all present. MS thanked the guests for their support and attendance. - The displays at the back of the hall were highlighted, created by the Trust, other local conservation groups, and including the Sandhurst Camera Club, whose display photographs were part of a competition sponsored by the Trust. 	
-	PRELIMINARY MATTERS	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The required health and safety procedural notices were made. - In his introduction MS said that 2017 had been a very productive year with the Trust making a small surplus, and approx. £15k of projects undertaken alongside a full programme of activities. Four new Trustees had been appointed and two corporate sponsorship opportunities secured with TAG and Fluor. - The new Trustees were introduced to the meeting: Jane Biscombe, Mary Ferriss, Catherine Morton and Peter Collins. - Ken Bigrave had stood down from his role as Trustee. MS thanked Ken for his immense contribution to the work of the Trust. - Hilary Godber had stepped down from supporting the Trustees Board and taking the minutes. MS thanked Hilary for her much-valued help and support and notified the meeting that JH had been appointed as Minutes Secretary. - Particular thanks were given to all staff at the Blackwater Valley Countryside Partnership for their support over the year. - MS thanked the volunteers including Chris Bean and the 'wood gnomes', Paul Sanders for the walks programme, and those who had also led specialised walks. - Thanks, were also extended to all Trustees and Members for their continuing support that is vital to ensure the Trust continues to meet its objectives. - MS explained the voting system to be used for decision-making to all Members present. 	
1.	MINUTES OF LAST MEETING – 16th February 2017	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All present Trust members agreed the Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting as a true record. There were no matters arising. 	

2.	REPORTS AND ACCOUNTS	
	<p>Highlights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Projects facilitated by the Trust were £15.2k in total value - The Trust contribution to the projects was £4.7k with a Small Grants value of £0.9k. - On average, there were approx. three members' activities undertaken per month during 2017. - Other highlights included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Big Valley Ramble o Trustee recruitment o Launch of 'Saving Our Swifts' o Circular walks programme (over 300 walkers in total attended) o Woodland Flowers (launched through Fluor sponsorship) o Corporate sponsorship <p>Activities for Members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Walks and Talks – bats, birds, beetles, fungi, flowers, small mammals - Circular walks programme - Bird-/bat-box building - Regular monthly email update to members - Website, Social Media <p>Projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Completion of Stag Beetle Stumperies project - Launch of Woodland Flowers project - Darby Green Pond rejuvenation - Launch of 'Saving Our Swifts' - MS reminded the meeting that all members can propose suggestions for new projects <p>Appeals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2016 – Stag Beetle Stumperies. There are 50 all-round the Valley – now completed. - 2017 – Woodland Flower habitats. Restoring native wild flowers to areas where the seed bank has been depleted. <p>Website</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New version of website had been introduced. Further revamp of website to include improved links with social media. Thanks, were given to Peter Collins for his ongoing webmaster efforts. <p>Policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A number of policies had been reviewed and updated: <p>Treasurer Report (AR)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Total income for 2017 was £15,854 - Total expenditure for 2017 was £13,898 - This left a surplus in 2017 of £1,956 - Balance sheet – total funds carried forward for 2017 was £25,410. - A Trust Member asked a question regarding a possible difference in figures between the income for 2017 shown on the slide and the figure shown in the Annual Report papers. AR explained that the figure on the slide was an aggregation of more than one-line entry (regarding donations and Gift Aid) shown within the Annual Report papers and was therefore correct. <p>Small Grants Scheme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One small grant was made this year totalling £900. £1,700 was also applied for but no payment yet made. Further applications would be welcome. <p>Membership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Member records have been updated and moved onto a new online membership system that will make future membership communications and reminders a lot easier. - Membership volumes are climbing back to previous levels - currently sitting at 284. - Thanks, were given to PC, AR and Emily Moore from the Partnership for the excellent work undertaken to transfer the Membership data to the new system. <p>Business Plan 2018</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The business plan for 2018 is still being finalised and will be made available to Members on the website in due course. <p>2018 Plans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expansion of Woodland Flowers project - Expansion of Business Membership - Beating the Bounds - Expansion of 'Saving Our Swifts' campaign 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Widening our involvement and influence in local environment issues e.g. 'Natural Surrey Heath' - Path and riverbank improvements 	
3.	APPOINTMENT OF CHARITY TRUSTEES RETIRING BY ROTATION AND NEW TRUSTEES	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MS, BB, DM and AR were the Trustees nominated for retirement by rotation in accordance with the constitution. All four Trustees were willing to be reappointed. - It was resolved by all present Trust members to approve the reappointments. - It was proposed to appoint JB, PC, CM and MF as trustees and all present Trust members resolved to approve their appointment. 	
4.	APPOINTMENT OF OFFICERS (CHAIRMAN, SECRETARY AND TREASURER)	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MS (Chairman), SB (Secretary) and AR (Treasurer) were all proposed to continue in post. - All present Trust members resolved to approved their reappointments. 	
5.	ANNOUNCEMENTS	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - None. 	
6.	ANY OTHER BUSINESS	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A Member asked for an update on the Hawley Meadows Path. SB explained that the contractor had gone bankrupt. Hampshire CC is leading on this project and SB has been chasing for further updates. Work is unlikely to take place during winter. It is expected that the cattle will still go on later in the year. BVCT will not be asked to contribute to funding. 	
-	TALK – SWIFTS WITH EDWARD MAYER (EM)	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Following the tea break at 8.30pm, EM was introduced to the meeting by CW and gave a very engaging talk on Swifts and what can be done to help them. - Member Les Alexander asked how swifts could be identified against other birds e.g. House Martins. EM directed all attendees to the website where detailed information could be found on swifts and the conservation work supporting them. The website link is www.swift-conservation.org. 	
-	MEETING CLOSE	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Following EM's talk, MS thanked all for attending and closed the meeting at 9.40pm. 	