



DRAFT Minutes of 2016 Annual General Meeting

Wednesday 19th October 2016 at 7:00pm

Staveley Village Hall, Harrogate

The meeting was quorate, 51 members having signed the attendance register.

The AGM was preceded by a talk by Tom Thom introduced the ecology of Staveley, its place in the wider landscape and its contribution to creating a Living Landscape. Following the AGM, Dr Rob Stoneman explored the global threats to wildlife and explained how the work of YWT, by delivering at a local scale can implement solutions for our wider global scale.

The Chair, of the Board of Trustees, David Counsell, then took the floor to open the AGM.

1 Apologies for absence and proxies

Apologies were received from J Burgin, Ricky and Nancy Donner, Mr & Mrs Sauntson Mr & Mrs Scotting, Mr & Mrs Mills, Mr & Mrs Smith, Mr EH Holdroyd, Robert Kania, Mr and Mrs Reid, Mr & Mrs Lomas, Mr & Mrs Stonehouse, Gus McLaren, Bob Missin, Professor Sir John Lawton, Johan Bergstrom-Allen, Wendy Whalley, Flora Owen, Keith Hillery, Daphne Wood, Mr L Wilson, Michael Horox, Andy Mendus and John MacArthur.

The members also returned 13 proxy votes – 10 to the chair, 2 to Jonathan Leadley and 1 to the majority. Minutes of 2015 Annual General Meeting

The draft minutes of the 2015 AGM had been published on the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust website in advance of this meeting and printed copies were provided at the AGM.

As no questions were raised or amendments requested, Hugh Williamson proposed and Joanna Royle seconded the acceptance of the minutes as a true record of the 2015 AGM, and the motion was carried.

2 Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2015

David Counsell as Chair, reminded members that the Annual report and accounts had been published on the Trust website, a summary included in the summer edition of *Wildlife Yorkshire*, available at the York Office from September and made available in printed form at the AGM.

Louise Farnell, Honorary Secretary, presented the Annual Report of the Trustees, illustrating those achievements which served to illustrate five key themes from the Business Plan:

- Being Local – Louise acknowledged that seeking to be active in every community in a region the size of Yorkshire was a challenge but we are making progress for example in Huddersfield where natural flood defences were providing benefits to the local community as well as a landscape richer in wildlife.
- Gateway sites – provide sites from which we can organise our work and inspire others. Improved visitor facilities at Potteric Carr, including the new visitor centre and café, will enable more people to come into close contact with nature and be inspired to take part.

- Nature matters – if we can engage and inspire more people in the natural world, Society is more likely to look after it. During June 2015, for example, over 800 people took part in 30 Days Wild and made a commitment to make contact with wildlife on each day of the month.
- Living Landscapes – with over 3,000ha in land management as YWT Nature Reserves this still only covers one quarter of one percent of Yorkshire’s land area. As such, we are working with other land-managers to extend the influence of YWT across the landscapes of Yorkshire. The Yorkshire Peat Partnership for example has brought over 30,000 ha of land back into conservation management.
- Living Seas – it is essential that we work with industry to create sustainable fishing practices and one important way to achieve this is to educate consumers about the impacts of their buying habits.

Hugh Williamson (Vice Treasurer) then presented a summary of the Trusts’ financial performance in 2015/16 and explained that the Accounts are summarised in the magazine and in the annual report available in the room. Hugh explained that the Trust had successfully navigated our first year using New Charity Accounting Rules and had planned an affordable unrestricted deficit of £0.2m in the year.

The greatest proportion of income in 2015/16 came from Grants (55%) with just under a quarter (23%) coming from membership and subscriptions. Just under two thirds of our expenditure was on Living Landscapes(57%) and Living seas delivery (6%), with almost a quarter of our expenditure on inspiring, involving and influencing (24%). 14% was spent on membership, fundraising and governance.

This year also saw the introduction of a trading subsidiary, which is required by charity law as our non-primary purpose income grew above £50k. Yorkshire Wildlife Services limited set up from 1st April 2016 and will bring in catering, retail and design work. Any surplus from the Trading company will be passed back to YWT in a tax efficient way.

Hugh then took a forward look and explained that staff and trustees are currently working up the Trust’s five year plan for 2018-2023. There will be headwinds due to the decision to leave the European Union, possible statutory changes to funding streams such as landfill tax and increasing competition for limited funds as the squeeze on Government agencies and Local Authorities continues. Our income base will need to adapt and grow and we expect an increase in focus on individual giving and development of alternative funding streams, alongside continuous efficiencies in operations and fund generation.

David Counsell then invited questions from the floor. He explained that one question had been received prior to the meeting from Tim Cowley. Tim’s question did not specifically relate to the annual report and accounts and was thus addressed during Rob Stoneman’s presentation along with a more comprehensive response that is appended to these minutes, written after the AGM had completed.

David Counsell asked the meeting to accept the Annual Report and Accounts for 2015/16. This was proposed by Paddy Hall and seconded by Christine Packer, and the motion carried by the floor.

3 Appointment of Auditors

The resolution to reappoint Saffery Champness as the Trust’s auditors, and to authorise the Board to fix their remuneration, was proposed by Hugh Williamson, seconded by Stephen Martin and the motion carried.

5 Retiring and Election of Trustees

David Counsell reported that two trustees had stood down during the year. At the time of the asking for nominations for the Board, five places were available and three nominations were then received, meaning that a vote was not needed. All three nominees had been co-opted onto the Board at the December 2015 meeting and were now standing for formal election. Personal profiles circulated were circulated with the Agenda and posted on the website.

David Counsell introduced Alastair Fitter, Mike Cooke and Martin Randle to the room and asked the meeting to approve the appointment of Alastair, Richard and Martin. This was proposed by Richard Tripp, seconded by Christine Packer and carried by the floor.

David expressed thanks to Alison Wright and Colin Macintosh who had stepped down as trustees during the year.

As the formal business of the AGM was complete, the meeting closed at 20.15.