



# Yorkshire Wildlife Trust

## Annual General Meeting 2020 Draft Minutes

Saturday 21 November 2020 at 10.00am on Zoom

Estimated attendance on the day - 190 members, with a total of 213 participants for the streamed online AGM event.

### Agenda

#### 1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair of the Board of Trustees, Professor Mike Cooke CBE, gave a warm welcome to virtual attendees and led the proceedings of the AGM that took place online via Zoom and live streamed on YouTube due to the coronavirus pandemic and in hope that this format would enable more join in as they looked back through the successful year.

Mike thanked those who voted and 144 who attended on Zoom and 40 on YouTube and noted apologies.

#### 2. Annual Report for the year ended 31 March 2020

Rachael Bice (Chief Executive) looked back on 2019/20 and shared some of Yorkshire Wildlife's successes and future ambitions, including:

- The climate and ecological emergency – we will become carbon neutral by 2030 and will help identify, design and implement Nature Recovery Networks across Yorkshire
- Rachael highlighted the Askham Bog campaign and thanked Sir John Lawton and Prof Alastair Fitter for their contribution and everyone for their signings and donations
- Potteric Carr is now a home to breeding bearded tits, bitterns and marsh harriers.
- Give Peat a Chance campaign — Rachael gave thanks for support and noted that hopefully the Peatlands work can catalyse greater funds to prevent carbon emissions
- The Trust is working with other Wildlife Trusts to develop an English North Sea strategy to help the variety of species around our coastline, as well as working with partners across a range of projects including on sustainable scallop production and seagrass propagation.
- Nature on our doorstep has never been more important, which the Bradford Urban Discovery project exemplifies.
- Engagement events are evolving from our experience of making a big splash at Countryfile Live North at Castle Howard.
- Future ambitions including campaigning for 30% of UK's land and sea to be positively managed by 2030 and using a generous legacy gift to support our ambitions for the design and creation of the nature recovery network, to work more in partnership, and develop exciting acceleration projects.
- The Wildlife Recovery Fund is focused on creating the conditions to help more species to survive, thrive and for us to call for those absent to return to Yorkshire too.
- Rachael thanked Members for the huge and sustained effort to support wildlife, together we are making a huge difference

### **3. Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2020**

Peter Batchelor (Director of Finance and Central Services) presented a summary of the Trust's financial performance in 2019/20. Key points included:

- The Trust has generated income of almost £8.7m for the year 19/20. Peter went through income strands such as contracts and grants for the delivery of conservation and engagement projects. Other income streams included membership £1.3m and legacy £1m. Peter highlighted closer relationships with partners and how we are benefiting from receiving generous gifts and donations to our cause.
- Over the year the Trust spent £8.2m, Peter noted the largest expenditure was 56% on Living Landscapes and smallest expenditure was on Living Seas at 5%. Peter went through examples of expenditure and highlighted the combined spending of rivers and Peatlands programme was £3m, £0.4m was spent on Living Seas programme working closely with Esmee Fairburn Foundation and supported by European funding streams, Nature Matters and engagement was £1.5m which included the successful Countryfile Live North and the Askham Bog campaign. £0.57m of fundraised income helped enable us to reach more people and resource operations. Peter noted the Trust exited the historic Wildlife Trust pension scheme and received a refund.
- The financial reserves were explained and it was noted there are net assets valued over £12m, largely made up of fixed assets (land). General unrestricted funds was up from prior year by 0.62 to 1.27. Peter highlighted the Trust is anticipating a similar year in 2021/22 with a forecast of £9m income and expenditure estimated to result in a £0.2m deficit.

### **4. Formal Business**

#### **1. Minutes of previous AGM**

The draft minutes of the previous AGM held at the Mercure Parkway Hotel, Otley Road, Leeds, on 20 October 2019 – had been published on the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust website in advance of this meeting and in hard copy on the request for Members to vote upon.

On this matter, our Members voted 270 For, Jo Webb (Vice Chair of Trustees) proposed and Martin Randle (Honorary Treasurer) seconded the acceptance of the minutes as a true record of the 2019 AGM, and the motion was carried.

#### **2. Annual Report and Accounts**

Members were asked to vote to support the recommendation by the Board of Trustees to accept the Annual Report and Annual Accounts for Yorkshire Wildlife Trust as an accurate record. On this matter, our Members voted 273 For, Martin Randle proposed and Jo Webb seconded the acceptance of the Annual Report and Accounts as an accurate record of 2019/20.

#### **3. Appointment of Auditors**

A proposal to reappoint Saffery Champness as the Trust's auditors was made with 269 for votes for fro Members, proposed by Martin Randle, seconded by Jo Webb and the motion was approved.

#### **4. Re-Election of Trustees**

Mike reported that the Nominations Committee had received and approved nominations for the following Trustees to be re-elected to the Board:

- Professor Mike Cooke CBE, our member voted 271 For, 2 Against, this re-election was proposed by Jo Webb and seconded by Richard Tripp (Honorary Secretary).
- Professor Alastair Fitter CBE, our members voted 272 For, 2 Against this re-election was proposed by Richard Tripp and seconded by John Lawton (President of Trustees).
- Mr Martin Randle, our members voted 271 For, 1 Against, this re-election was proposed by Richard Tripp and seconded by Mike Cooke.

Their biographies were published on the website and magazine, Mike noted 3 new Trustees have been identified through a recruitment process who will be co-opted ahead of elections next year. Mike thanked those who had voted and handed over to Jo Webb for a question and answer session.

#### **5. Member's Questions**

Jo chaired the question and answer session which were taken live from the Q&A box covering a variety of subjects such as rewilding in Yorkshire, future plans at Stirley Farm, options for Life Memberships, the nature recovery network ambition, facilities and Staveley, online voting and the process for co-opting Trustees.

Questions before and during the meeting were answered directly to Members or in the meeting, with the offer of sending in additional questions to [supporter.services@ywt.org.uk](mailto:supporter.services@ywt.org.uk).

Mike thanked Jo with the help of Rachael and Peter for the question and answer session, as the formal business of the AGM was complete Mike handed over to the special guest speaker Dr Amir Khan.

#### **6. Guest Speaker – Dr Amir Khan**

Dr Amir Khan joined the meeting from his home in West Yorkshire and shared his knowledge of how nature can benefit all of our health and wellbeing. His care for his community and passion for nature was clear and he warmly engaged with Mike to answer questions at the end of his talk. Mike thanked him for joining the meeting and sharing his insights with the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust community.

#### **7. Date of the next AGM & Closing Remarks**

Mike thanked Lauren Perthen (Head of Supporter Engagement) and Alistair Clay (IT Development Officer) for IT support and allowing 190 people to join.

Rachael thanked the staff team, volunteers and supporters and guest speaker Dr Amir Khan for attending and interacting at the AGM. Rachael noted that there will be an AGM feedback survey which will be circulated by email.

RB proposed 16 October 2021 as the date for the next Yorkshire Wildlife Trust AGM and closed the meeting.