

**HAWRIDGE AND CHOLESBURY COMMONS' PRESERVATION SOCIETY**  
**53rd ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
**TUESDAY 24TH NOVEMBER 2020 on ZOOM**

**DRAFT MINUTES**

**PRESENT:** Lindsay Griffin (Chairman), David Barnard (Vice-chair), Philip Prettejohn (Treasurer), **Committee Members** – Nick Brown, Isobel Clark, David Dennis (Minutes Secretary), Sarah Higgins, Mark Hobbs, Janet Hopkinson (Co-opted member), Rebecca Walton and Tim Watts. **Members:** Christine Stott, Richard Bysouth, Brigid and John Farmer, Charles and Elizabeth Firth, David Tarn, Sarah Tricks, Paddy and Windsor Thomas.

**1.0 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

Lindsay Griffin welcomed everyone to the 53rd AGM of the Society, the first to be held remotely as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic. Apologies were received from Joan Barnard, Gillian Fleckney, Mike Fletcher, and Joan and Margaret Walton.

**2.0 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS AGM**

The minutes of 2019 AGM held on 26th November had been posted on the HCCPS website and emailed to all those who had attended.

It was agreed that these were a true and accurate record and were duly signed by Lindsay Griffin.

**3.0 MATTERS ARISING**

All matters arising were due to be addressed in reports and presentations later in the meeting.

**4.0 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

A copy of Lindsay Griffin's report is attached, the salient points being:

- There had been a large increase in visitors during lockdown. Initial concerns over litter were dealt with by increased signage, and most people took their litter home as requested.
- Our finances are stable, so the committee is proposing no increase to the level of subscriptions this year – the rates have now been unchanged for at least a decade.
- Contract Work: the use of James Joliffe for the major maintenance work is now well established and resulting in good feedback from the community. Isobel Clark was thanked for all the dedicated work that she had performed over many years using the Society's tractor, which was acquired back in 1990. Since that time many local people have contributed greatly to driving and maintaining it. Initially it resided for nearly 15 years with Windsor Thomas who trained other drivers and looked after it superbly.
- Volunteers: A number of committee members and others assist with numerous tasks, although the regular Conservation Volunteer sessions have been suspended this winter because of Covid 19. In particular, Janet and Peter Hopkinson keep the smaller paths clear and undertake other work from time to time.
- Young volunteers: A very welcome development this year is the work done by Duke of Edinburgh volunteers who can perform various tasks which count towards their awards. They and their parents were thanked for their involvement.
- As a result of all this activity, the tractor will now be sold, saving on maintenance and insurance costs. The Society can now concentrate more of its resources on interesting new projects rather than mainly on maintenance.

- Other volunteers contribute very helpfully in many different ways. Veronica Mash with the website; Susie Bell with designing the calendar; Mike Wallis, who kindly rebuilt the 'bug hotel' after it had been vandalised, and others involved with species work for moths, amphibians, mammals, and the planting of wild flowers. This last activity involves the school children, a good way of encouraging the next generation to care for the Commons.
- The sponsors of the calendar and Orbitpress were also thanked, as their support ensures a healthy profit on this very successful fund-raising venture.
- The Committee: All were thanked, and in particular, tribute was paid to David Barnard, who was standing down after 41 years – a record never likely to be broken. He had served as Chair and Vice-Chair and made a huge contribution to the Commons over more than four decades. A bench will be erected, probably close to the Village Hall, and a social event to celebrate his work is planned as soon as such pleasures become possible again.
- Christine Stott was thanked for her continuing support and Lindsay concluded by reminding the meeting that she was now standing down as Chairman after her latest three year tenure. She felt that the Commons were in good shape, that there were many exciting projects planned, and of particular importance were those involving young people.

## 5.0 TREASURER'S REPORT

A copy of the Society's final accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> October is attached, the salient points being:

- Philip Prettejohn thanked our Hon. Examiner, Mike Fletcher for his help in reviewing the accounts.
- The results show a small surplus for the year, largely due to the increased sales of cards and calendars, plus the generous contributions of its sponsors.
- Income from subscriptions is a little down but made up for from donations. We should encourage all new residents to join.
- Costs overall are stable, but with some work not carried out this period. Bills for the recent pond work are yet to be received.
- The use of a contractor has been successful in cost terms as well as results, enabling us to sell the tractor in the coming year and eliminate its running and insurance costs.
- We have received a free three month extension to our Zurich insurance policy due to Covid 19.
- We end the year on an even keel and look forward to 2021.
- Philip thanked his predecessor, Ben Lewis, for his guidance, and the Chairman and committee for their help throughout the year.

## 6.0 QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

There were no questions.

## 7.0 ELECTION OF COMMITTEE

**Chairman:** At the end of Lindsay Griffin's three year tenure, she was obliged to stand down. Mark Hobbs was proposed by David Dennis and seconded by Sarah Higgins. There being no further nominations, Mark Hobbs was duly elected.

**Vice Chair:** Lindsay Griffin was proposed by Christine Stott and seconded by David Barnard. There being no further nominations, Lindsay Griffin was duly elected

**Treasurer:** Philip Prettejohn was proposed by David Barnard and seconded by Tim Watts. There being no further nominations, Philip Prettejohn was duly elected.

**Minutes Secretary:** David Dennis was proposed by Isobel Clark and seconded by Mark Hobbs. There being no further nominations, David Dennis was duly elected.

**Committee Members:** Nick Brown, John Caple, Isobel Clark, Sarah Higgins, Rebecca Walton and Tim Watts were all prepared to stand for re-election en-bloc. The committee was proposed by David Dennis and seconded by David Barnard. There being no other nominations, all the above members were duly re-elected.

**Additional Committee Member:** Following David Barnard's resignation there was one committee vacancy. Janet Hopkinson had expressed her interest and was nominated by Tim Watts and seconded by Isobel Clark. There being no further nominations, Janet Hopkinson was duly elected.

**Hon. Examiner:** Philip Prettejohn proposed that Mike Fletcher be reappointed as Hon. Examiner and he was duly elected.

There being no further formal business to discuss, the meeting closed at 8.20pm. Mark Hobbs, as the incoming Chairman proposed a vote of thanks to Lindsay Griffin. She had made an outstanding contribution, not just in the last three years as Chairman, but had, over many years, shown great dedication to the Society in a number of roles. He was delighted that Lindsay would be continuing to carry on with her many tasks in the role of Vice-chairman.

There followed a number of short presentations by David Dennis and Isobel Clark covering the heather project, the two ponds and the moth survey. Lindsay Griffin completed the programme with information on the mammal survey. She showed a photo of the replacement bench in memory of Edgar Taylor that had been erected by John Caple and Phil Matthews' team. The photo showed the bench being used by Edgar's 92 year-old daughter Rosemary and her husband, Roger Bierrum, who were delighted with it. Lindsay concluded her presentation by praising the involvement of young people on the Commons - school children, students and Duke of Edinburgh's Award volunteers.

**Signed**.....

**Dated**.....