

Campaign to Protect Rural England, Somerset Branch

Minutes of Annual General Meeting 2.00pm, 25th October 2018 Glastonbury Town Hall

Prior to the meeting there was an open meeting for CPRE members and the public entitled "Affordable Housing to Keep Our Countryside Alive" The meeting was well attended with 74 people present, including representatives of several Parish Councils, Sedgemoor District Council, Mendip Hills AONB, CPRE Avonside, Hastoe Housing, Exmoor Rural Housing Network. Presentations were given by Shaun Spiers - Author & Executive Director of Green Alliance, Lois Lane - Research and Policy Advisor, CPRE, Tim Crabtree, Wessex Community Assets, Jane Birch, Community Council for Somerset and William Habershon, Habershon Land. Please contact admin@cpresomerset.org.uk to request a copy of the speakers' slides.

The AGM itself started at 4.15pm. There were present:

Roger Martin, President
Chris Lewis, Chairman
David Lloyd, Executive Member
Don Parkinson, Executive Member
John Roberts Executive Member & Honorary Treasurer
Fletcher Robinson, Executive Member
Tim Whittingham, Executive Member

In addition, 27 CPRE members plus many of the guests mentioned above were in attendance. The attendance list is held by the Branch Manager.

Apologies For Absence - the following members of Somerset CPRE had sent their apologies: Cathy Nicholls (Executive Member), Jill Clark-Fuller, Sue Custance-Baker, Michael Benison, Claire Mellish, Martin Horrox, Janette Ward, Phil Holms, Richard Frost - Mendip Society, Matthew Bennett, Roger Stoakley, Anna Bushell, Abigail & Alexander Ballinger.

Other apologies were received from: Lisa Turner- Blackdown Hills AONB, Georgie Bigg - Chair of CPRE Avonside, Liz Payne - CPRE Somerset Planner

Confirmation of the minutes of the 2017 AGM - the minutes of the last AGM, held on 12th October 2017, were tabled and approved unanimously.

Matters Arising - there were no matters arising.

Annual Report 2018 & Accounts - Everyone present had received a copy of the 2018 Annual Report and accounts ending December 2017. John Roberts, Treasurer, gave an overview of the accounts, explaining that income was down slightly as the branch had received a legacy the previous year. Overheads have increased since the decision to take on Liz Payne as a part time Planner. Trustees had agreed to do this on a 2 year basis, subject to review in the future. Overall, the Branch is in a healthy position and the SOS Appeal had generated an unexpectedly good response.

Chris thanked Liz Payne and Becky Collier, Branch Manager, for all their work and he thanked Roger Martin for continuing his role as Branch President.

Chris also thanked the other volunteers for all that they do, in particular:

- All this year's Trustees - Stuart Eyles, Chris Lewis, David Lloyd, Cathy Nicholls, Don Parkinson, John Roberts, Fletcher Robinson, Tim Whittingham
- John Roberts for his efficient and organised work as our Treasurer.
- Phil Michael for auditing the accounts
- Fletcher Robinson for his enthusiastic work as Planning Volunteer for South Somerset
- Welcome back to Nick Whitsun-Jones who will be volunteering for us, having previously been a Trustee
- Stuart Eyles who is retiring as Trustee due to work commitments
- Ferelith Drummond for hosting Mendip Group meetings and looking after our gazebo.
- Vernon Hughes, Janette Ward & Phil Holms for helping to run the stand at the Green Scythe Fair in June
- Mike Merrifield for keeping us up to date with planning matters in Taunton - and sending us regular press cuttings.
- Kit Houghton for judging our landscape photography competition and Paul Jones, Editor of the County Gazette, for judging duties and promoting the competition.
- Somerset Live and the Western Gazette, Mid Somerset Series, Frome Standard and Somerset Guardian newspapers for promoting us as sponsors of the Village Shop of the Year competition
- CPRE South West for providing funding for our new videos - and thanks to Tim Whittingham for being our star presenter.
- Ordinary members who continue to support us by remaining members
- Those members who so generously supported our SOS appeal
- Patricia Thompson for raising money for CPRE Somerset through the Henstridge lent lunch
- Finally - many thanks to everyone who has helped make this year's AGM a success - all the speakers for giving up their time and travelling some distance, John Roberts, Ferelith Drummond, Fletcher Robinson and Cindy Carter for helping with arrangements on the day.

Chris also thanked all the ordinary members who continue to support us by remaining members.

Chris explained that two new people were interested in becoming Trustees. Hugh Williams and David Julian were both in the audience and would, hopefully, be attending the next trustee meeting in November. If they remain comfortable with becoming a Trustee, they would hopefully be co-opted at a meeting then or soon after.

Election of Directors/Trustees - Roger Martin, President, took the Chair at this point. Nominations had been received for Chris Lewis, David Lloyd, Cathy Nicholls, Don Parkinson, John Roberts, Fletcher Robinson and Tim Whittingham to be Executive Members. Roger proposed that these be elected en bloc and this was seconded by Ferelith Drummond and unanimously supported by those present.

Election of President - Chris Lewis took the Chair again and explained that a nomination had been received for Roger Martin as President. Roger's election had been proposed by Cathy Nicholls and seconded by Don Parkinson and was approved unanimously.

Any Other Business - Roger Martin raised the issue of population and Chris explained that he had tried to raise the issue again with CPRE national office in recent months after it was raised at the 2017 AGM but had not received a response. He added that there are currently 40,000 households in

Mendip District but the 2041 household projections predict that there will be 50,000 households. John Scivier from Stockland Bristol Parish meeting added that the Sedgemoor Local Plan allows for 11,000 new homes in the life of the Plan. Chris said that new figures for Sedgemoor predict that 12,000 homes will be needed.

Mike Merrifield asked what CPRE's position was on the prospect of Exmoor National Park and the Quantock Hills AONB joining together, suggesting it could be a good thing for tourism and that Taunton & Bridgwater could be gateways to a larger National Park. Chris said that CPRE nationally will respond to the Glover review of National Parks and AONBs and he will be inputting into this on behalf of CPRE Somerset. He will liaise with Mendip Hills AONB on their views on the idea of the AONB including the East Mendips. He felt there could both positive and negative, consequences to the proposed possible merger of the Quantocks and Exmoor. David Lloyd said that the Friends of Quantock had discussed the idea but largely felt that the Quantocks faced different issues to Exmoor and the Quantocks would be better off kept separate. He agreed that visitor numbers to Exmoor are relatively low and there is potential to change this but he did not feel that including the Quantocks would make that difference to visitor numbers. David felt that they are quite distinct landscapes and landscapes do mean things to people. A member expressed concern about the issues caused by second-home ownership in areas like Exmoor and felt CPRE should speak up more about this.

The issue of wind turbines was raised and it was suggested that there has been a hiatus in applications in recent years but could be a change in policy soon. Chris Lewis agreed but said it was unlikely that there would be a move back to more onshore wind turbines, but there was much potential offshore. John Scivier said he would like to see more renewable energy schemes. He said Hinkley C will cost far more than it will ever generate and it is a very carbon intensive construction project. Chris agreed that there was a balance to be struck and said that Sustainable Frome wanted to make Frome a renewable town. This was a positive idea but, if put into practice, there could be landscape concerns.

Becky Collier thanked Chris for everything he does as Chair and for running today's meeting.

Chris thanked everyone for coming and the meeting closed at 5.00pm.

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Prof. Chris Lewis, Chairman CPRE Somerset

Date: