

SWT CENTRAL BORDERS GROUP

MINUTES OF AGM

HELD ON THURSDAY 11TH APRIL 2019 7.00PM AT LANGLEE COMMUNITY CENTRE

Item

- 1.0 APOLOGIES**
Apologies had been received from Carey & Sue Coombs, Lawrence Roberston, Ena Robson and Jim Russell
- 2.0 MINUTES OF LAST AGM**
The Minutes of the previous AGM dated 12/04/2018 were proposed by Anne Hogarth and seconded by Frank Brown
- 3.0 MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS AGM**
- 3.1 We reported at the last AGM that Central Borders Group had been awarded funding from SWT Impact Fund to develop a 'leaflet' for passengers on the Borders Railway. After discussion on possible content, the medium for conveying the content such as an 'app', and noting the existing "On and Off The Borders Railway" publication, it had been decided not to proceed with this project. The funding had been returned to SWT HQ.
- 4.0 CHAIR'S REPORT**
- 4.1 **Membership**
SWT membership of Central Borders Group is stable and we have been delighted with attendances, including new faces, at our talks and on our walks.
- 4.2 **Outings**
Many thanks are due to Jim Russell for organising the 2018 outings. These started at the Hirsell Estate at Coldstream, took us to Lindean and a round trip of Harestanes, Woodside and Monteviot. I have to give special mention to the outing to the Chisholme Retreat near Robertson. This was a new venue for us and thanks are due to Frances and Sarah who were very helpful in advising and organising things. This 'help' included Malcolm having a 'sleepover' which allowed him to set out moth traps overnight so that those coming the following day could witness, with astonishment I think I can safely record, the spectacular variety of beautiful, and beautifully named moths that emerged before being set free. Thank you Malcolm for allowing us to share one of the normally hidden sides of the natural world. The day continued with a lovely walk round the lake, through the trees, onto the hillside, and then afternoon tea! A day to remember.

The 2019 outings will be starting soon with details on our Central Borders Group website or on the paper syllabuses.
- 4.3 **Talks**
Thanks are due to Eric for the 2018/2019 Talks programme which covered a wonderfully diverse range of topics from far and near. The 'far' talks started with Chris Rose providing us with, not only a wonderful photographic record of his Antarctic trip "Artists for Albatrosses", but also an insight as to how he creates his amazingly detailed paintings. Still pretty 'far' for most of us, we went to the Black Mountain of Bhutan with David Long, not only showing us images of the botany of Bhutan, but also telling the 'story' of earlier recorded botanical trips there. This was further enhanced by David's complementary 'storytelling' of his own trips there. 'Far' in another direction and continent, a north to south birding trip through Chile showing the astonishing variation in landscape and habitats of Chile. Getting closer, Eric himself transported us to the Algarve and conveyed his love of the area and its botany. Charles Everett brought us nearer to home showing the challenges and rewards of a photographic project on Mull. Much 'nearer', Henry and I combined to make a plea for 'looking and seeing' locally. Let's not forget Members' Night with its welcome range of topics, again from far and near, some laced with a good helping of humour! The 2019/2020 talks have been arranged and look interesting.

4.4 Reserves

Work has been undertaken on a number of the SWT Reserves located within 'our patch' and also in adjacent 'patches'.

Bemersyde Reserve near St. Boswells has experienced extensive vegetative growth in the area near the hide which has resulted in very restricted views of bird life on the water. This is a SNH SSSI that SWT manage. Consideration is being given as to how clear the area.

Gordon Moss Reserve The open 'meadow glades' that were created, with our help, along the railway line are cut at the end of summer. These were created to encourage the growth of wild flowers such as Lesser Butterfly Orchid and attract associated butterflies and moths, such the Small Pearl Bordered Fritillary and other insects.

Hare Moss and Dunhog Moss are what I call 'my reserves' as I am Reserve Convenor for them both, and enthusiastically so in terms of what can be seen on these two relatively small sites. The habitat is changing year on year at Dunhog Moss following the tree felling on the north side with Sarah Eno carrying out a botanical survey this year with the view to recording the changes. Down at Hare Moss we have to thank Hugh Chalmers, and his canoe, for helping us carry out temporary repairs to the man-made 'island' on the lochan. It was a rather surreal experience for me to see Hugh and Dawn setting off on the canoe with brash rafts to carry out these repairs on the island, some of it carried out with head torches! A big thank you to Dawn. More permanent repairs are programmed for autumn, hopefully in daylight! A fungi survey is arranged at Hare Moss by Borders Fungus Group on 16th November. This will be an open event with details to be advertised.

I would really like to encourage all of you to visit the local, and not so local, SWT Reserves and get to know them.

Not one of 'ours' but a very local reserve is Lindean which is now managed by SBC. SBC are proposing to take down the existing bird hide, which is in poor repair and no longer affords good visibility of the water due to surrounding vegetation growth over the years. A new hide is proposed by SBC in a better viewing location. Our group has intimated to SBC that we would assist with the costs for this project.

4.5 Presentations

Since the last AGM we have had committee members giving presentations to Leitholm WI, on the work of the SWT, and a presentation to Jedburgh Guides on what you can 'look and see' locally. Our input was recently requested by Philiphaugh Primary School in Selkirk on a P4/5 'sustainable project' which is ongoing with Kate and Tricia. We are currently arranging a presentation for Momentum Borders Charity, a brain injury service based in Galashiels. It is great to get these opportunities to 'spread the word' about our group, our local natural environment and broader wildlife issues.

4.7 Funds

CBG funds remain healthy thanks, in no small part, to you all contributing to our events in the form of raffle tickets and donations.

The Eildon Booklet sales have been steady and are now on to the reprint stocks.

The TESCO collection raised £143.03 in January, despite being right after Christmas. A big thank you to the volunteers who manned the table. Personally I have to say thank you to Margaret who did the stint with me and made the time go really fast.

If you are wondering what our funds are used for I am sure John will fill us in on details in his Treasurer's Report. Personally I would like to mention the purchase, with Frank's help, of a CBG reconditioned laptop which means it can be used by anyone on committee as required. This is particularly useful for presentations outwith our group meetings. With my Reserve Convenor hat on I would also like to say a 'thank you' for the funding of work at Hare Moss in terms of boardwalk extension and hide repairs.

4.8 **Thanks**

Time for some personal thanks at the end of the first of my three years as Chair:
Thank you to all committee members for your input, and putting up with my style of doing things.

Thank you to Eric and Myra for the raffle.

Thank you to Shirley and Vicky for quietly 'getting on' with organising the tea break. By the way, we will be encouraging you to bring your own cups next year.

Last but by no means least, to Malcolm who not only efficiently carries out his Secretary duties, despite the hassles that have been the new data protection requirements, but has also 'been there' for me, particularly in the absence of a Vice Chair at the moment.

4.9 **SWT AGM**

Before I finish I would like to look forward and draw your attention to the fact that the main SWT AGM is being held in the Borders this year on the 21st September, most likely in Galashiels at the Netherdale Campus. The AGM is usually short and sweet followed by interesting presentations and finished off with a group walk. Watch out for booking details which will appear in future SWT magazines.

5.0 **TREASURER'S REPORT**

John Ferguson distributed copies of the Income and Expenditure Account for the year ending 31st March 2019.

It was noted that the cost of a reprint of the Eildon Hills Booklet was included which would be offset by future sales.

There being no comments from the membership John's excellent and concise report was adopted and approved by Alison Smith and seconded by Malcolm Lindsay.

6.0 **ELECTION OF COMMITTEE**

6.1

Chair	Alison Smith	continuing	
Vice Chair	vacant		
Secretary	Malcolm Lindsay	continuing	
Treasurer	John Ferguson	continuing	
C. Member	Eric Middleton	continuing	
C. Member	Lawrence Robertson	standing down	
C. Member	Jim Russell	continuing	
C. Member	Kate Bisset	continuing	
C. Member	Louise Wallace	continuing	
C. Member	Tricia Wylie	continuing	
C. Member	Dawn Spark	co-opted requiring election	Proposed Alison Smith Seconded Tricia Wylie
C. Member	Anne Hogarth	co-opted requiring election	Proposed Malcolm Lindsay Seconded Frank Brown

6.2 The Chair noted that the Vice Chair position was still vacant and that it was becoming critical to find a person to fill this role to ensure the continuing impetus and enthusiasm of the group. Alison Smith emphasised that the functions that the Chair undertakes can be flexible and in no way needs to 'mimic' previous Chairs. Representing Central Borders Group on steering groups and the like could be carried out by other members of committee or, indeed, other interested members. The Chair invited anyone interested in this role to speak to her if they would like to discuss what it could involve further.

7.0 **AOCB**

Malcolm Lindsay said that the successes of the last year reflected all the hard work and effort by the Chair, Alison Smith. His vote of thanks was heartily endorsed by all those present.

There being no further business Alison Smith thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.

