

SWT CENTRAL BORDERS GROUP

MINUTES OF 2020 AGM

HELD ON 5TH NOVEMBER 2020 AT 7.30PM BY ONLINE ZOOM FORMAT

(16 SWT members attending)

Item

1.0

APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from Lucy Hoad.

2.0

MINUTES OF LAST AGM

No comments had been received on the previous AGM Minutes. The Minutes of the previous AGM dated 11/04/2019 were adopted as a true record proposed by Kate Bisset and seconded by Tricia Wylie.

3.0

MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS AGM

3.1

(4.9) Noted that the 2019 SWT AGM had been held at Netherdale Campus Galashiels on 21/09/19 hosted by Central Borders Group (CBG). The AGM was followed by a guided walk along the Tweed led by CBG members to conclude a successful day.

(6.2) Noted that Mike Rutherford had come forward to join the committee with a view to becoming Vice Chair. (See item 6.0)

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 and Kate Bisset for organising the 2019 outings.

The first of these was at Spottiswoode led by David Long who explained the work he was undertaking in managing the woodland habitat there. Highlight of the day was being lucky enough to see one of the Large Red-belted Clearwing moths that David has been recording emerging from the birch stumps.

A memorable afternoon was spent at Middletoun Farm where Alistair Cutter guided us round the agri-environment project work being undertaken sharing his extensive knowledge of the various habitats and associated wildlife.

An afternoon event was held at Hare Moss Reserve led by Reserve Convenor Alison Smith. This included descriptions of the work carried out here over many years and ongoing projects, mainly by CBG volunteers, as well as discussion on what can be seen there over the seasons.

Unfortunately the St. Mary's Loch programmed walk was cancelled due to poor weather conditions.

A joint event with Borders Fungus Group (BFG) was held at Hare Moss on 16/11/2019. This was fascinating in terms of the number of fungi recorded in such a small area with BFG's members providing excellent guidance to CBG members on their finds.

The 2020 outings were cancelled due to the Covid 19 lock down restrictions including all programmed walks, the Borders Fungus Group's further survey day at Hare Moss and the bird ringing event at Glenkinnon.

4.3

Talks

Thanks are due to Eric for the 2019/20 talks programme. This was unfortunately disrupted by Langlee CC being unavailable at short notice, due to the fire at Peebles High School, and then with the Covid 19 restrictions.

However, we did have the following talks:

“Vultures and Wallcreepers in the Pyrenees” by David Parkinson providing us with some amazing visuals of these birds and their habitat.

“Sleeping with the Enemy” by Reuben Singleton giving us an insight on his experiences as a consultant ecologist working for ‘the other side’ in terms of developers.

“Poisonous Plants in the Scottish Borders” by John Robertson. This followed up on John’s previous general talk focusing this time on our own local patch poisonous plants.

“A Cycling Tour of the SWT Reserves” by Dr. Tim Duffy took place in St. Peter’s Church as an alternative venue. This gave us a whistle stop tour of the SWT reserves in Scotland.

Members’ Night had so many potential contributors that we couldn’t include all of them!

“Farming and Wildlife” by Roger Manning was an interesting personal story of his work and involvement within the farming sector.

The final talk by Philip Munro on the Golden Eagle Reinforcement Project could not take place due to the Covid 19 lockdown restrictions with the 2020/21 talks needing to be reviewed in relation to Covid 19 restrictions pertaining at the time.

4.4

Reserves

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

Bemersyde Reserve No work has been agreed with NatureScot, (previously SNH), on the extensive vegetative growth in the area near the hide which has resulted in very restricted views of bird life on the water.

Gordon Moss Reserve The creation of further glades are planned with maintenance of existing glades ongoing.

Hare Moss and Dunhog Moss A small enthusiastic team of volunteers carried out more permanent repairs to the artificial island in February 2020 in somewhat cool conditions accessing the island from canoes. The swans declined to use the island thereafter for nesting but it is hoped that they will next year.

Lindean

This is not a SWT Reserve but it is a very popular local reserve which is managed by Scottish Borders Council. No progress has been made with the proposed new relocated hide at Lindean. The delay is due to Scottish Borders Council reviewing its estates. Central Borders Group had committed to assist with funding of the replacement hide.

4.5

Presentations

AS undertook a guided walk at Hare Moss for the Momentum Group for people with brain injuries which was enjoyed by all.

4.7

Funds

CBG funds have remained healthy, thanks in no small part to you all contributing to our events in the form of raffle tickets and donations. This funding stream may be disrupted with the Covid 19 restrictions on face to face events.

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

The TESCO collection date for 2020 was under discussion but may not happen due to Covid 19 restrictions.

(See item 5.0 for Treasurer’s Report.)

4.8

Chair's Thanks

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

Thank you to Eric and Myra for their continued organising of the raffle at our winter talks.

Thank you to Shirley and Vicky for quietly 'getting on' with organising the tea break. A particular thanks to Shirley on this occasion who is standing down from this 'duty' after many years.

Excellent news to report since the last AGM that Mike Rutherford has come forward with a view to taking up the Vice Chair role. Mike is back in the south of Scotland having spent some years as Curator of the University of the West Indies Zoology Museum I would like to personally thank Mike for greatly easing my load and my concerns over the future of the group.

Thanks must also go to Louise Wallace who is standing down after two terms on committee. Louise has been efficiently responsible for essential matters such as booking of Langlee CC for our winter talks, communicating with TESCO for collection events and being a reliable 'back marker' on our walks. A personal thank you to Louise from myself for all her support and encouragement during my time as Chair of CBG.

My thanks go to Lucy Hoard for assisting me on our monthly review of planning applications.

Thanks to Malcolm who has carried on efficiently carrying out his Secretary duties. Malcolm should have been standing down at this 2020 AGM but is carrying on with Secretary duties until April 2021 due to the Covid 19 situation.

I am delighted to report that Lisa McLeish has agreed to take over as Secretary from Malcolm at that time. We were hoping that Lisa could 'shadow' Malcolm during 2020/21. In some way depending on the Covid 19 restrictions. Personal thanks to Lisa for agreeing to take this role on.

5.0

TREASURER'S REPORT

John Ferguson's Income and Expenditure Account for the year ending 31st March 2020 has been available on the CBG website.

Items to note under INCOME are:

Clark Woodlands Trust grant monies of £1500 made up of £500 for material costs for repairs to Hare Moss island and £1000 being held by CBG for the Lindean Management Group towards proposed replacement hide project at Lindean

Items to note under EXPENDITURE are:

The grant monies of £1000 re-paid to Clark Woodlands Trust as Lindean replacement hide project delayed

Bordersprint amount of £241.20 printing works was in connection with preparation of A3 presentation boards on CBG reserves and local wildlife for use by CBG at public presentations and events.

The report proposed for adoption by Alison Smith and seconded by Malcolm Lindsay.

6.0

ELECTION OF COMMITTEE

6.1

Alison Smith
Mike Rutherford

Chair from 2018
Vice-Chair co-opted

Continuing until 2021

Proposed by Alison Smith
Seconded by John Ferguson

Malcolm Lindsay
John Ferguson
Eric Middleton
Jim Russell
Kate Bisset
Louise Wallace
Tricia Wylie

Secretary from 2015
Treasurer from pre-2004
C. Member from pre-2004
C. Member from 2012
C. Member from 2015
C. Member from 2014
C. Member from 2018

continuing until April 2021
requires re-election 2022
requires re-election 2022
requires re-election 2021
continuing until April 2021
standing down
continuing until April 2021

Dawn Spark
Lucy Hoad

C. Member from 2019
Co-opted

requires re-election 2022

Proposed by Alison Smith

Seconded by Kate Bisset

Proposed by Malcolm Lindsay

Seconded by Alison Smith

stood down during 2019

Lisa McLeish

Co-opted

Anne Hogarth

C. Member

7.0

AOCB

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

Alison S. Smith Chair CBG 07/11/2020