

MINUTES OF THE 40th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE LONDON WILDLIFE TRUST

Held at Camley Street Natural Park, 12 Camley St, London N1C 4PW

Saturday 9th October 2021 from 3:30 – 7:30pm

Attendance:

Members (excl. Trustees)	54
Trustees	7
Staff members	9
Total	70

Proxy votes:

Invalid	0
To the Chair	65
To another	0
Total	65

Welcome, introductions and apologies:

Members were welcomed by Elaine Sullivan, Chair of Trustees Members, who introduced the honorary officers and thanked LWT team for their hard work during COVID. The Chair also extended thank you to LWT members for their continued and vital support. The Chair mentioned recent developments including key projects during COVID; Butterfly Banks, Keeping It Wild, Great North Wood and stressed the importance of nature during the pandemic. Other areas of our work focused on the importance of mission-based consultancy, membership recruitment (online and recent face-to-face recruitment), and ongoing monitoring work at our reserves to show impact measurement. The Chair welcomed the new Director of Visitor Engagement, Charlie Sims.

1. Introduction of the AGM Formal Business

Stephen Snaith (Hon Secretary) introduced the formal business of the meeting. There were no formal apologies received.

2. Minutes of the 39th AGM

The minutes were accepted as a true record by a show of hands from members and signed by the Chair; there were no votes against or abstentions.

3. Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

4. Presentation and approval of Audited Accounts for year ended 31st March 2021

Stuart Wetherly (Hon. Treasurer) summarised the accounts for the last financial year. Hon. Treasurer thanked team at LWT for their resilience over the difficult 18 months. Thanks to our funders and corporate partners for their flexibility. Thanks to members & the public for the support of LWT fundraising activities during the year.

Question from members on the accounts:

Will the accounts be circulated to members in advance of the AGM in future to allow members a chance to read these before the vote?

Accounts were posted on the LWT website but not circulated in advance of meeting. Agreed to send these out to members Monday 11th following the AGM and to make these available in advance of the AGM in future.

The hon sec proposed that the accounts be approved; and approved by show of hands. 10 abstain, majority approval.

5. Appointment of Auditors

The hon sec recommended the continued use of Crowe UK LLP as the Trust's auditors. This was approved by a show of hands: 2 abstains, majority approval.

6. Changes in Board Composition

The board have conducted a skills audit for Trustees and expertise is needed in the areas of finance; events, retail & hospitality; lobbying; urban land management. Trustees have identified a need for increased diversity in ethnicity & disability at Trustee level. Two prospective Trustees will be formally recommended before the next AGM.

The Chair extended a huge thank you on behalf of the board & Senior Management Team to Ruth Chambers, who stayed on as Trustee in exceptional circumstances.

The Chair thanked Stuart Wetherly for his time as Trustee & Hon. Treasurer & for his work transforming the financial processes & policies of the organisation.

The Chair advised the meeting that the Board had appointed Hannah Fox as Hon Treasurer and Stephen Snaith as Hon Secretary.

Hon. Secretary Stephen Snaith confirms the board of Trustees for 2021/2022 as: Ms Elaine Sullivan, Dr Melissa Glackin, Dr John Tweddle, Mr Rufus Radcliffe, Dr Stephen Snaith, Ms Hannah Fox, Ms Amy Mount, Mr Kapila Perera'

7. Any other business

No formal AOB. CEO and Chair emphasised that they welcome questions at any time in the year by email. They took several questions from the floor, including:

Can you provide a recap of the financial records?

Gordon reiterated that a copy of the annual report 2021 is available on London Wildlife Trust website, and a copy will be emailed to members following the meeting. LWT will ensure this is provided in advance of AGMs in future. LWT availed of emergency funding, government schemes & furloughing of staff during the past year. Funders allowed LWT to reappropriate funds where applicable and we also received additional funding from other funders (eg. Esmée Fairbairn Foundation provided LWT a £600,000 emergency grant).

The Trust works in a 3-year cycle and foresee that LWT will end in a strong position at the end of the 3 years.

Can you provide information on email from Craig Bennet at TWT

Craig Bennett, CEO of The Wildlife Trusts will be introducing a new collective strategy in November. The senior management team at LWT will work with Trustee and Trust staff at other wildlife trusts on this collective strategy. LWT will outline where we aim to align our strategy with wider Trusts & areas where we want to focus on our own individual strategy due to the unique aspects of LWT.

Membership figures/funding queries – before & after COVID-19. How important is membership/funding to the Trust?

Membership is fundamental to the growth of the Trust. Currently LWT has approx. 14,000 members/8,500 memberships – this funding is crucial to providing core, unrestricted funding for LWT. Previous business model focused heavily on grant funding which we aim to diversify in the coming years.

Membership recruitment is expensive so we will need to invest significantly in order to see strong returns. During COVID we focused a lot on online recruitment, as we move out from under COVID restriction's our face-to-face recruitment programme has begun in July 2021.

Close of Formal Business at 5:30-5:45 PM

Members' evening

- Introduction to new Director of VE – Charlie Sims
- A Celebration of Camley Street Natural Park - Mathew Frith, Director of Conservation & Leah McNally, Director of Strategic Projects & Engagement
- 6:30pm Closing remarks – Gordon Scorer, Chief Executive Officer London Wildlife Trust
- 6:35pm - Open access to Camley Street Natural Park & refreshments
- 7:30 pm – Close