

## **Minutes of the 62nd Annual General Meeting of Suffolk Wildlife Trust**

**Saturday 14th October 2023**

Stoke by Nayland Village Hall, Church Street, Stoke by Nayland CO6 4QP and by teleconference

The meeting commenced at 10am and was chaired by Suffolk Wildlife Trust's Chair, James Alexander.

### **1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from: David Barker, Patricia Cooper, Lynne Farrell, Julian Roughton, Lord Tollemache, Peter Wilson.

### **2. Confirmation of the Minutes of the 61st Annual General Meeting**

The Chair confirmed that no one wished to propose alterations to the Minutes.

- The Minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record and **APPROVED** by the meeting.

### **3. Annual Report of the Board of Trustees by the Chair, James Alexander**

The Chair began by reflecting on the annual review of the Trust's year sent to all Members. He noted the scope of activity is an indication of the ambitious and impactful charity their Trust is. The title of the review 'Making Suffolk wilder' echoes the Trust's 2030 strategy - to protect the wildlife we still have and bring back what we've lost - which is set by the Board.

The Chair remarked that Members will increasingly hear the Trust talking about 30% and 1 in 4, which are the headlines for our ambition - crucially by mobilising our county to act collectively and collaboratively for nature.

He noted the Trust estimates Suffolk has only half of the 30% of habitat needed for an effective nature recovery network and is working to bring about the landscape scale shift nature needs - whilst of course still protecting our high value nature-rich reserves.

The Chair then explained that 'inspiring 1 in 4 people' is about mobilising our county, so everyone is able to 'do their bit' for nature and climate, at home, at work, at school and within their local community. We can do this by sharing our experience and ecological expertise, to give groups and individuals the confidence to do this.

The Chair noted that learning and engagement activity has been at the heart of the Trust's approach for decades. This year, with our sights on 1 in 4 people taking action for nature, we have shifted our focus more towards enabling others to take the lead in their community – and drive a societal shift towards choices which favour nature becoming the norm. By increasing our commitment to training and supporting individuals, teachers and community groups, the Trust can reach more people and empower more action for nature.

Across the county our wildlife advisors are enabling others to take the lead. This year for example we have worked with 31 community groups and parish councils and In Ipswich, thanks to funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the Trust is working with local people to bring nature back into their community spaces.

The Chair directed Members to the summary accounts, which were presented as bar charts (and the full accounts pack which was shared on the Trust's website). These give Members an overview of how the Trust is funded - and most importantly where we invest our resources to maximise our impact for nature. The Trust's ambition to make the decade to 2030 the one in which we bring nature back underpins the decisions made by your Board of Trustees about where to focus the charity's resources.

The Chair noted the Board of Trustees is pleased to report that the Trust is in good financial health and thanked members for their support. He noted membership underpins everything the Trust does and the support of Members in every community of Suffolk gives the Trust our mandate to speak up for nature.

The Chair reflected that at the Trust's 2022 AGM, we announced the opportunity to buy the farmland alongside the Deben to create Martlesham Wilds and launched our £1million match fundraising campaign. He thanks everyone who had contributed to the land purchase appeal and noted the local fundraising for Martlesham Wilds was an inspiring example of the community coming together to make something happen on their doorstep. In all we received over 3000 individual donations. The year of fundraising coincided with the last year of farming and over the next few years, we will 'let nature take the lead' and watch the fields transition into wildness.

Looking to the future, and the many challenges facing Society, the Chair assured members the Board of Trustees is determined that Suffolk Wildlife Trust will continue to be a strong, confident and influential voice for the county's wildlife and wild places. The huge volunteer effort that supports all areas of activity is key to this and the Chair thanked all volunteers for their magnificent contribution.

The Chair concluded his report by thanking the Board of Trustees, the CEO and the staff team.

#### **4. Ordinary resolutions:**

The Chair, James Alexander proposed the following resolutions:

**i) To approve the annual accounts of the Charity**

Proxy votes received in advance: For 92 / Against 0

- The proposal was **APPROVED** at the meeting.

**ii) To approve the re-appointment of Peters, Elworthy & Moore as auditors to the Charity**

Proxy votes received in advance: For 92 / Against 0

- The proposal was **APPROVED** at the meeting.

#### **5. Ordinary resolutions:**

The Chair, James Alexander thanked Anna Saltmarsh for her service as a Trustee. In line with the Articles of Association, Anna is retiring after completing two 3-year terms on the Board.

Our Articles require one third of the Board to be elected by members each year. With 6 Trustees standing this year, James Alexander confirmed we have fulfilled this requirement.

The Honorary Treasurer, Calum Thomson proposed the following resolution:

**iii) To re-elect James Alexander as a Trustee**

Proxy votes received in advance: For 94 / Against 0

- The proposal was **APPROVED** at the meeting.

The Chair, James Alexander proposed the following resolutions:

**iv) To re-elect Joan Hardingham as a Trustee**

Proxy votes received in advance: For 94 / Against 0

- The proposal was **APPROVED** at the meeting.

**v) To re-elect Robyn Llewellyn as a Trustee**

Proxy votes received in advance: For 94 / Against 0

- The proposal was **APPROVED** at the meeting.

**vi) To re-elect Tim Woodward as a Trustee**

Proxy votes received in advance: For 94 / Against 0

- The proposal was **APPROVED** at the meeting.

**vii) To elect Sharon Goddard as a Trustee**

Proxy votes received in advance: For 94 / Against 0

- The proposal was **APPROVED** at the meeting.

**viii) To elect Miranda Cooper as a Trustee**

Proxy votes received in advance: For 92 / Against 0

- The proposal was **APPROVED** at the meeting.

**6. Any Other Business**

No questions were submitted by Members in advance.

James Alexander introduced one special item - the retirement of our Patron Lord Tollemache and invited Suffolk Wildlife Trust's President William Kendall to thank Lord Tollemache on behalf of the Members.

Lord Tollemache is an original member of the Trust, dating back to the early 1960s. He sent his apologies to the AGM and said *'It has been a joy to see the growth of the Trust over so many decades and I wish it all success in the future.'*

As a mark of our thanks for his steadfast support, Lord Tollemache was presented with a Suffolk black poplar sapling grown as a cutting from a notable specimen at the Trust's Bromeswell Green nature reserve.

**The Chair closed the meeting and thanked everyone for attending, both in person and on Zoom.**

Signed.....

Date.....