



We care for the Chilterns

## **DRAFT Minutes of the Annual General Meeting**

**Of**

### **The Chiltern Society**

A company limited by guarantee and registered in England and Wales, no. 4138448,  
also a registered charity, no. 1085163,  
held on 14 October 2022 at the Hazlemere Community Centre.

**Present:** Earl Howe, Patron; John Taylor, Vice President; Simon Kearey, Chairman; David Harris, Vice-Chairman; Brian McGowan, Treasurer, Helen Griffiths, General Secretary; members of the Executive Council; Tom Beeston, Chief Officer, and approximately 60 members of the Society.

#### **1. Chairman's welcome**

The Chairman opened the business of the AGM and welcomed all members to the annual meeting of the Society. The Chairman ran through the agenda of the meeting and highlighted the conference to take place in the afternoon on the Glover Review.

#### **2. General Secretary's housekeeping**

Helen Griffiths gave a brief update on general housekeeping arrangements.

#### **3. Quorum and apologies for absence**

Helen Griffiths advised the meeting that apologies had been received from the President, Michael Rush, and from approximately 43 members who were unable to attend. Helen Griffiths further confirmed that a quorum of at least 20 members was present and that accordingly the Annual General Meeting could proceed to business.

#### **4. Chairman's Annual Review 2021/22**

Simon Kearey expressed his gratitude on behalf of the Society for the work done as a trustee by Michael Jepson, recently deceased.

Simon Kearey presented his annual review of the activities of the Society for the year 2021/2022 focussing on the impacts from the extensive work of the Society's many volunteers, and the development of the Society's sites including a pending acquisition of 20 acres. Simon Kearey highlighted that the Society has seen growth in income and expenditure around projects and that this has also been an opportunity for the Society to partner with others across the Chilterns. Simon Kearey also reviewed topics discussed at the 2021 AGM including the place for consideration of trees with the Society, National Park review

outcome, overlaps with Parish councils, the campaigning role of the Society, walks, and chalks streams. Simon Kearey thanked all the volunteers, group leaders, trustees together with the staff team.

#### **5. Minutes of Annual General Meeting held 30 October 2021**

The minutes were circulated and approved by the members. Matters arising from the minutes – There were no matters arising.

#### **6. Going Forward 2022/23 Report**

Tom Beeston presented his report on the activities of the Society going forward for 2022/23 looking at the areas of Fundraising, Volunteering, Rights of Way, Conservation, Planning & HS2 and Heritage & Arts. Tom Beeston highlighted for each area the trustees and staff members involved, key activities, areas of involvement/interest, and expected outputs. Tom Beeston also took the opportunity to thank the many volunteers involved in these activities.

#### **7. Treasurer's Report and Presentation of Accounts**

Brian McGowan presented the accounts for the financial year 2021/2022 to the meeting. He advised that the overall income of the Society for the year was £574K, which was a 32% increase on the prior year. This was primarily due to the Society's involvement in major projects such as the Green Recovery Fund and the Smarter Water project. Legacy income also increased 61%. Expenditure was up by 16% reflecting necessary project staff costs. A surplus of £68.6K was achieved in the year. The Society continues to hold net assets of approximately £1m with the majority tied up in land & property, restricted funds or set aside for strategic activities. Brian McGowan stated that the Society is in a strong and stable position to continue its good work and grow its presence and influence.

Nutshell Accounts were thanked for their bookkeeping work during the year. Azets was thanked for their review of the accounts.

#### **8. Appointment of Reporting Accountant**

Azets was proposed as reporting accountant for the year and the members approved the reappointment.

#### **9. Election of Officers and Trustees**

Earl Howe proposed for election the Officers who had been duly nominated and seconded by members. The following elections were then approved by the members at the meeting:

Chairman	Simon Kearey
Vice Chairman	David Harris
Treasurer	Brian McGowan
General Secretary	Helen Griffiths

#### **10. Address by the Patron**

Earl Howe thanked Michael Rush, and the work of the Bluebell Guild and the volunteers for more than 75,000 hours of volunteering. The Earl highlighted the work on campaigning, conserving landscape, heritage and footpaths and providing enjoyment and understanding of the countryside, as encapsulated by the ongoing project on the River Chess. The Earl emphasised that the Society is about the long term and horizon with the recipe for success in membership support, competence and harmonious relationships.

- 11. End of formal proceedings** – Simon Kearey declared the end of the formal proceedings and advised that it would be followed by an Open Forum for discussions and questions from the members and later a conference on the Glover Review. The formal meeting was accordingly closed.

Helen Griffiths  
General Secretary  
October 2022