

# MINUTES



## Annual General Meeting of the Cotswold Way Association

Held on the 28th October 2022 commencing at 1400 at the Scout Headquarters, Selsley, Stroud GL5 5LB

Those attending: John Bartram (Trustee and Chairman), Malcolm Higgins (Trustee and Secretary), John Tennant (Trustee), Clare Muir (Trustee), Richard Holmes (Trustee), B Gill, M Rear, J Dansie, D Owen, J Bartram, M Reid, S Jones.

1. **Apologies for absence** were received from: Keith Sisson (Trustee), Martin Lovegrove (Trustee), Chris Gill, Robert Talbot.
2. Minutes of the last meeting held in August 2019 were unanimously accepted as a true record of the meeting.
3. **Matters arising** from the last meeting. There were no matters arising.
4. **Election of Trustees.** The Chairman explained the Constitution requires one third of Trustees to stand down at each AGM and if eligible may offer themselves for re-election. With one Trustee resigning (see para 5 below) there was a requirement for two Trustees to stand down. The results were:
  - a. John Bartram stepped down by rotation and stood for re-election. Re-election was proposed by Margaret Reid and seconded by David Owen and unanimously approved.
  - b. Malcolm Higgins stepped down by rotation and stood for re-election. Re-election was proposed by David Owen and seconded by Margaret Reid and unanimously approved.
  - c. The Chairman said that Simon Jones, a member and present at the meeting, had put his name forward to become a Trustee. Simon had met Keith Sisson (Trustee) who recommended his appointment. Simon was unanimously approved to become a Trustee.
0. **Resignation of Trustees.** Keith Sisson resigned as a Trustee, having been a founding Trustee when the CWA was formed in 2015. The Chairman praised the immense contribution Keith made to the CWA throughout his tenure, always being proactive and keenly involved in its all aspects of the work. More recently, and on behalf of the CWA, Keith edited and published the Cotswold Companion, An Insider Guide which has already been hugely successful with sales and very well received. The book will be a lasting and fitting legacy to all the work Keith has contributed throughout his time as a Trustee. All present fully endorsed the Chairman's comments.
1. **Annual Report.** The Chairman referred to the Annual Report which had been circulated with the Agenda for the meeting and which had been submitted to the Charities Commission, commenting on the following:
  - a. A Memorandum of Understanding has been signed between Cotswold National Landscape (CNL) and the CWA to enable a much closer working relationship.
  - b. A new disability route on Leckhampton Hill has been created after securing funding from HF Holidays. This route also provides greater accessibility for families with small children and those using buggies.
  - c. A CWA online shop has been set up and is trading successfully.

- d. The Cotswold Companion, An Insider Guide has been written and published and sales are doing well.
  - e. The CWA has two social media outlets: Twitter and Facebook. Steve Holbrow (a volunteer helper) took on Twitter and has been successful in raising the number of followers from 50 people to almost 1,000. Clare Muir (Trustee) has recently taken on Facebook and while still in the early stages she has already achieved a following of over 750.
2. **Finance Report.** The Chairman referred to the Finance Report which had been circulated with the Agenda for the meeting and which had been submitted to the Charities Commission and commented on the following:
- a. The finances of the CWA had improved significantly since the last AGM. A combination of donations from the public and organisations using the Cotswold Way plus sales revenue from the shop and the book all contributed to this.
  - b. There was a general discussion around other ideas for fundraising, all of which were noted for future exploration.
3. **Other major trails supported** within the AONB. The Chairman explained that in the CWA constitution requires a review of other major trails supported by the charity. where they route through the Cotswold AONB.
- a. Trails that have previously been supported are the sections through the Cotswolds AONB of the following trails: *Wychavon Way, Winchcombe Way, Wardens Way, Monarchs Way, Macmillan Way, Heart of England Way, Gloucestershire Way, Diamond Way and Wysis Way*. These trails were unanimously approved to continue to be supported.
  - b. In addition to the trails above there was discussion around adding two more trails to those supported: *Wychavon Way* and *Three Choirs Way*. The Chairman agreed that the Trustees would investigate the merits of adding these trails to the approved list.
4. **Any Other Business**
- a. The Chairman said Margaret Reid was stepping down as the volunteer Membership Secretary in March 2023 and thanked her for her work and support.
  - b. The Chairman said he had recently been approached by Philip Hargreaves, a university lecturer in marketing at the University of the West of England, offering to assist as a volunteer with marketing activities. This offer has been accepted and we look forward to working with Philip in the future.
  - c. There was a general discussion centred on the Cotswold Way and the people using it. It was felt people should be encouraged to visit the villages adjacent to the route with the possibility of having a system whereby walkers could obtain a stamp in a pass book from a local shop. This might encourage more trade for the shops and add interest for the walkers.
  - d. Mavis Rear suggested the CWA web site publish an accommodation guide and pointed out that North District Wardens held such a guide for their area. The Chairman said the Natural England web site did have an accommodation guide but suspected it was out of date. The Chairman agreed the Trustees would look into this.
  - e. John Dansie suggested a diversion of the Cotswold Way through Kingswood to avoid a particularly steep section of the route. After discussion the Chairman agreed to raise this with CNL who were responsible for such things.
  - f. Bernard Gill asked the Trustees to ensure that any improvements to the Cotswold Way be carried out in a sympathetic way in keeping with the surrounding environment. This was discussed and the Chairman agreed this was an important consideration that would be included in assessing future projects.
  - g. John Tennant (Trustee) expressed concern over the section of the CWA Constitution that requires Trustees to step down after two consecutive terms of three years in office, observing this would mean the current Chairman would have to step down in two years'

time. The Chairman pointed out the difficulty of making changes to that particular clause in the Constitution as it was stipulated by the Charities Commission in the draft Constitution examples they issued to new charities. The Chairman therefore felt this clause could not be changed.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 1530.