

Bittern Countryside Community Interest Company

Old Station Building, Station Road, Arnside, Cumbria LA5 0HG



Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at 7.00 pm on Friday 26th April 2024 at RSPB Leighton Moss Visitor Centre, Silverdale.

1. Shareholders present: Ann Kitchen (Chair), Ken Kitchen (Secretary), Ray Anslow (Finance Director), Fiona Allan, Robin Horner, Val and Malcolm Stevens, Liz Anslow, Roger Cartwright, Martin Elsworth, Lynne Farrell, Brian Hancock, Caroline Howard, Jeanette and Mike Smith, Mike Warren (Landscape Trust) and John Webb,

Also present were Lucy Barron (AONB Partnership), Jenny Elsworth, and Dawn Hancock

Apologies were received from Ian & Liza Henderson, Sue Briscoe, David Player, David Askew, Lorna Askew, David Farrant, Ann Gegg, Laura Middleton, Stephen Kirtley, Lesley Edkins, Elizabeth Richards, Heather Rhodes, Kate Schofield, Jean Watts, Margaret Bromley-Webb, Gillian Rimmington.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the last AGM (2023) and matters arising
The minutes of the last AGM held on the 5th May 2023 were approved (Proposer: Val Stevens, Seconder: Ray Anslow).

Matters arising: The low energy security lighting for Yealand Primary School was at last being installed and would be in for the coming winter.

3. Chairman's Report April 2024

Welcome to all our shareholders.

Our Business Plan for 2022-2026 highlighted 3 categories we are addressing.

- 1: Protect and Restore Nature,
- 2: Build a waste free world and
- 3: Fix our Climate.

These three are all interconnected and working towards one of the aims will have benefits for the other two.

In order to enable everyone to take their part in protecting and restoring Nature, people need to know about and enjoy the Flora and Fauna of our area. The Wildlife Atlases which were written to facilitate this, continue to sell well. Unfortunately costs of reprinting are rising and we have had to increase the price of each booklet to £3.00 from April 1st. We are grateful to the RSPB for continuing to sell them in the shop.

I would like to take time to say how pleased we are that Arnside have set up a Sustainable Arnside Group. We wish them success in their endeavours. They

are looking at setting up a repair club. In addition our local primary schools are taking on board that we need to re-use school uniform not just buy new and throw the old away. It may be that we can help with the start up of this and other initiatives.

As far as Fix our Climate, we need to continue to encourage the use of heat pumps and improvements in insulation. We are delighted that Wildlife Oasis have taken the opportunity of a new car park to install a ground source heat pump. They are also looking to upgrade the second hand solar panel system which we gave them.

2023 was the year that the AONB turned into a National Landscape. As well as a new logo there are lots of new opportunities and challenges. We will do all we can to help. We now have to remember we are the ASNL!!!!

The Sustainable Schools' Project has left a lasting legacy and we will be building on this over the next 2 years. We have just received a grant of £12,000 to work with the ASNL unit and our local schools and community organisations with an emphasis on Climate and Wildlife.

Work is well underway on the Arnside/Silverdale National Landscape Nature Recovery Strategy. Some of our shareholders are working with the ASNL team and other volunteers to bring this about. One of the projects is a 5 year initiative to study the flora of the ASNL in a more scientific manner. To do this 56 of our special species will be studied as will 20 small areas, much like the Butterfly transects that Butterfly Conservation has run so successfully for so many years. If you want to know more please ask Lynne Farrell, Helen Rawlinson or myself.

Financially we remain on a sound footing and we have managed to further many of our aims. We always welcome suggestions from our shareholders as to further possible initiatives.

Our Directors have continued to work hard and I want to thank them for all that they have done over the past year. As I said at the last AGM we need to move forward and find some new Directors. I am delighted to say that Caroline Howard, who has worked very closely with us on the Sustainable Schools programme has agreed to stand as a Director and if elected will take over as Chair. Seventeen years ago Ian Henderson the Manager of the AONB unit and David Askew their Finance Officer set up the BCCIC. It will be great to once again have one of the ASNL team back on the Board. Ray who has proved a tower of strength over the past 3 years as Finance Director has come to the end of his term and will be retiring. We give him our thanks for all he has done. I will be taking over from him as Finance Director. Thanks to Ken for all his work as Secretary. He will be continuing for the next year. Val Stevens is coming to the end of her term but is happy to stand for re-election. If anyone else is interested in becoming a director please let one of us know.

Thanks are also due to Lucy and everyone at the ASNL office and also at the Landscape Trust. Thank you too to all our shareholders for making our work

possible over the years. Without your share capital and support none of this would have been possible. Finally can I wish you all continued health and all the best in the coming months.

4. Report of the Finance Director and Presentation of Accounts for 1st October 2022 to 30th September 2023:

The Financial Statement details, which are on the Website, cover the year ending September 30th, 2023. The Income/loss account shows a turnover of £10,616 with an Operating Loss of £18. Administrative expenses and income from the Solar Tariff and book sales have been largely in line with previous years. There is a deferred income of £2,000 for the Sustainable Schools Project (this was spent in early 2023). The Company has made a loss so there will be no tax liability. The balance sheet shows that the Company is worth £7,393 compared with £7,411 the previous year. Called up share capital has remained at £12,010.

A printed and signed copy has been sent to Companies House.

In the current financial year we have completed the spending for the Sustainable Schools programme. The security lighting at Yealand School has been paid for and should be completed this week.

The Financial statement was approved unanimously

5. Re-appointment/Election of Directors

Val Stevens was standing for Re-election and Caroline Howard was standing for election. Ray Anslow was retiring from the board.

Val and Caroline were proposed by Ann Kitchen and seconded by Ken Kitchen. They were elected unanimously.

It was announced that Caroline would take over as Chair and Ann would move to Finance Director. Ken Kitchen would remain as Company Secretary for a further year.

6. Any Other Business

Val Stevens proposed a vote of thanks to Ann Kitchen for all the work she had put in as Chair over the past 14 years.

The AGM closed at 7.25pm

Following the AGM, Lucy Barron and Caroline Howard gave an enjoyable and informative talk about the new National Landscapes and the Farming in a Protected Landscape project which has been a great success in the ASNL. The FiPL project will be coming to an end in 2025.