



# **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 29<sup>th</sup> April 2022 at RSPB Leighton Moss Visitor Centre, Silverdale.**

## **1. Present and Apologies**

Ann Kitchen (Chair), Ken Kitchen, Val Stevens, Jeanette and Mike Smith, Liz and Ray Anslow, Suzanne Crabtree, Roger Cartwright, Lynne Farrell, Fiona Allan, John Webb and Robin Horner were present for the meeting.

Apologies were received from Ian & Liza Henderson, David Player, David Askew, Ann Gegg, Laura Middleton, Stephen Kirtley, Lesley Edkins, Elizabeth Richards, Kate Schofield and Malcolm Stevens.

## **2. Approval of the Minutes of the last AGM (2021) and matters arising**

The minutes of the last AGM held in October 2021 were approved (Proposer: Robin Horner, Seconder: Ken Kitchen). There were no matters arising.

## **3. Chairman's Report on Company activities**

The chairman welcomed all shareholders to the meeting. A summary of the report is below. The complete report is available on our web site.

The Company has updated its Business Plan for Years 2022-26. The overall aims of the Company are to look at our activities in the light of 3 categories:

1. the need to protect and restore nature;
2. the importance of reducing waste and
3. doing what we can to mitigate the effects of climate change.

We have updated one of the Energy Saving booklets, Fact Sheet 4 'Avoiding Energy Waste' and have produced a new one; Fact Sheet 6 'The Problem with Plastic' that is particularly aimed at schools. The revised fact sheet on Ground and Air Source Heat Pumps are being finalised.

The solar PV initiative continues to reduce the carbon footprint of the area. Solar panels on Storth and Silverdale Schools are performing well and significantly help reduce school costs. Silverdale has recently received an award from a charity with a heat pump, some extra solar panels and some LED lighting.

The Parish Signboard project is bearing fruit under the aegis of the AONB. Contact is still awaited from Warton Parish as to whether they wish to participate.

The Wildlife atlases are still selling well and are now available in the RSPB shop. The BCCIC continues to support the work of the AONB in many other ways and has recently received a grant of £15,000 from the AONB Team to develop the Sustainable Schools programme about which I will speak later.

The Company remains on a sound financial footing and has managed to further many of its aims. We always welcome anyone wishing to become a shareholder and also suggestions for further possible initiatives.

Following David Askew's retirement from his post of finance director, his place has been taken by Ray Anslow. Our Secretary, Mike Smith is retiring and will leave the Board. We are asking for a volunteer for the post of Secretary. There remain vacancies on the Board and we would like to hear from anyone who is interested. Our thanks go to David and Mike for all they have done for the company. We would also like to thank our partners at the Landscape Trust and the AONB unit for their help.

#### **4. Report of the Finance Director and Presentation of Accounts**

The Financial Statement details of which are on the Website, covers the year ending September 30th, 2021. The Income/loss account shows a turnover of £477 with an Operating Loss of £121. Administrative expenses have been largely in line with previous years. The Company has made a loss so there will be no tax liability. The balance sheet shows that the Company continues to be worth £7,517 compared with £7,538 the previous year. Called up share capital has increased slightly to £11,310.

A printed and signed copy will shortly be sent to Companies House.

#### **5. Special Resolution to Change the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Company**

The Special Resolution was read out as follows:

(1) The following clauses in the articles of association shall be amended as follows: The first sentence of Clause 27.4 shall read:

'Each person appointed as a Director of the Company must be the registered holder of not less than 10 management shares and not more than 500 management shares in the Company.'

This will replace the words: 'Each person appointed as a Director of the Company must be the registered holder of not less than 100 management shares and not more than 500 management shares in the Company.'

(2) The articles of association as amended are in substitution for, and to the exclusion of, any articles of association of the company previously registered with the Registrar of Companies.

Approval of the Special Resolution was proposed by John Webb and Seconded by Val Stevens. It was then carried by a show of hands.

## **6. Presentation of the 2022-2026 Business Plan**

In answer to a question from Val Stevens, Ann Kitchen explained the purpose of the Business Plan. Updated every 4 years, the plan contains the main thrust of the Company's activities that will complement and satisfy the aims of the AONB. The latest Business Plan can be read on the Company's website.

Acceptance of the Business Plan was proposed by Robin Horner and Seconded by Ken Kitchen. The proposal was carried by a show of hands.

## **7. Re-appointment/Election of Directors**

Directors who have come to the end of their 3-year term are Ann Kitchen, Mike Smith and Fiona Allan. Ann Kitchen and Fiona Allan wish to be reappointed; Mike Smith retires as a Director.

John Webb proposed that the appointments be confirmed. This was seconded by Roger Cartwright.

## **8. Any Other Business**

John Webb raised the question of the Company's continued support for the use of wood burning stoves in view of recent press coverage identifying problems such as the particulate matter that results from wood burning. The Chairman said that she felt that wood burning stoves were not suitable in urban areas and that open fires of any kind should be discouraged. In a rural area such as our own woodburning stoves have a number of positives. Provided that no coal or wet wood was burned they provide a source of renewable heat with very few emissions. They also make use of a local resource with a much lower carbon footprint than oil.

Following the AGM, Ann Kitchen gave a talk about the Sustainable Schools programme that covers all the primary schools within the AONB.