

Cornwall Wildlife Trust
Annual General Meeting
held at Heartlands, Dudnace Lane, Redruth TR15 3QY
on 16th November 2019

144 members were present.

The President of Cornwall Wildlife Trust, Nicholas Tregenza (NT), opened the AGM at 10.00am and welcomed all present. NT made note of the housekeeping rules, specifically fire alarms & procedure and toilet facilities.

1. Apologies for absence

Phil McVey, Gill Saunders, Marie Lejeune

2. Minutes of the AGM held on 17th November 2018

The minutes were accepted as a true record and signed accordingly.

3. Matters arising from the minutes of 17th November 2018

None

4. Address by Officers of the Trust

President: Nick Tregenza

We're in a climate emergency! It has massive implications across the globe. It's coupled with a huge, still-growing human population, and reactions range from denial, through action to despair.

Looking back, I see we held our first workshop on climate change in 1990. The science then was far less clear. Now it's beyond doubt, and this crisis will last for a very long time. So, what is the Trust doing?

One of the Trust's strengths is its proven ability to hold and manage land over long periods. So we are actively purchasing, using legacies, land that can be used in various ways – we will hear more about that today - but particularly for re-wetting and for tree planting, to simultaneously increase carbon capture and enhance biodiversity and the resilience of our ecosystems.

On tree planting we will actually charge those who wish to plant trees on such land so that they are properly supporting their own long term commitment and thereby enabling a faster spread of this patchy 'Cool Forest' across the county where it will form a growing part of Cornwall's Nature Recovery Network.

In my imagination is a scene of a patient, hard-to-reach climate-sceptical grandparent assisting a feisty grandchild in planting a tree and being subtly transformed by that, and their individual influence on our democratic processes is also transformed ... and then they fund a little patch of trees

But my imagination has a mind of its own. What is not in my imagination is the governance of CWT. That governance is now so good it's scary – you'll be hearing Paul, our eagle-eyed Treasurer, next! In brief: a bigger-than-ever range of work is being very efficiently managed.

It extends to things that may not even be in your imagination. We don't have mangroves in Cornwall, but we do have great dark kelp forests and silky green sea grass beds around our coast. Countless fronds break off, around now, and end up as quantities of carbon heading for eventual fossilisation in marine sediments miles from where they grew. The championing role of CWT staff extends below the tideline and far offshore!

Vice President, Mark Nicholson (MN), gives a vote of thanks to Nick Tregenza

All present applauded.

Honorary Secretary, Daniel Eva (DE)

The Cornwall Wildlife Trust has had another very successful year. Those of you who were at the last years AGM at the Eden Project will remember that we promised to extend our nature reserves network and we have continued to do that. We have purchased land at the top of Helman Tor, at Bartinney Hill Fort and at Truthwall Common and Bostraze which will extend and join existing reserves. This will help us develop our landscape scale conservation work.

Thanks to the kind legacies of Diana Ball and Minnie Patterson we have been left land at Lanvean, St Mawgan and Lower Roseveare at Mawgan which will also become nature reserves in future.

The importance of legacies to the Wildlife Trust is very high. Thanks to a very generous legacy from Elizabeth Ann Nicholas we should be able to extend our nature reserves network again this year.

However we also need money to manage our reserves and conservation work. If you are considering leaving us a legacy, then unrestricted cash is also essential. A very generous legacy from John Barrington Cooke has enabled us to do extensive management work to Devichoys Wood. A very generous legacy from Denis Ellory will enable us to help manage reserves in Mid Cornwall that he loved so much.

Please remember that Cornwall Wildlife Trust is a charity. We aim to raise £4 million a year and can only do that with your help. Thank you to all the people who have left us legacies or plan to do so in the future. It really does make a difference.

As a charity Cornwall Wildlife Trust is governed by the Council of Trustees, which is elected by you, the membership. This year we have overhauled our governance and changed our committee structure and now have four committees overseeing the work of the Trust: Finance, Strategy, People and Audit & Risk. We have also confirmed our policy of fixed terms for trustees.

As a result there will be five trustees standing down at next year's AGM. If you are interested in becoming a trustee then keep an eye on the website to apply. We are particularly looking for people with good financial, organisational and human resources skills, but of course the main thing is caring about Cornwall, its wildlife and wild places.

The trustees are all volunteers and this is a way you can really make a difference, rather than protesting or feeling powerless. If anyone would like an informal chat about what it means to be a trustee then you can approach me today or contact me through the Trust.

Finally, I would like to thank the staff of the Trust for all their hard work this year and for putting together a Discovery Day that I am sure you will all find very interesting and stimulating.

All present applauded.

5. To consider the accounts and the reports of the auditors for the year ending 28th February 2018, Honorary Treasurer Paul Coyne (PC)

The Review of the Year in your possession contains the Trustees' statement, which is a summary of the audited accounts that they have reviewed and approved, copies of the full accounts are available on request from the Head Office. The auditors have issued an unqualified audit report, meaning that they are satisfied with our financial management and that the charity remains a going concern.

The statement relates to the consolidated Group activities of Cornwall Trust for Nature Conservation Ltd, trading as Cornwall Wildlife Trust, and Cornwall Environmental Consultants Ltd for the year ended 28/02/2019. Income and Expenditure is split between Unrestricted and Restricted funds. Unrestricted funds are given to support the Trust with, usually, no designation as to how they are spent. Restricted funds are given to the Trust for specific purposes, usually specified by the funders. The review sheet lays out our

finances in a simple, informative and hopefully attractive format.

The Statement shows the Trust received £5.09 million in the financial year and spent £3.70 million. Under “Net Movement in funds” you will see that there is an Unrestricted funds surplus of £374k and a Restricted funds surplus of £1.012k, giving a total rounded surplus of £1.39k.

Unrestricted funds produced a net income surplus for the year of £59k compared with last year, this due mainly to improved receipts from donations and legacies. Restricted funds also made a surplus in comparative net income for the year of £408k and this will be spent on conservation work in the current and future years. Cornwall Environmental Consultants had a poor year making a loss of £44k, but still contributing over £66k for overheads and support provided by the Trust and paying off over £7k interest on the inter-company loan.

The lower part of the Statement is devoted to the combined Balance Sheet of the Group and shows the overall movement year on year.

Fixed Assets, such as our HQ land, equipment, buildings and nature reserves, are up by £160k year on year. Our nature reserves or Heritage assets, which are acquired by the Trust either by gift or through purchase, have increased by an amount of £100k in the last year.

Current Assets, which include Debtors, are the funds we hold, we are owed or we expect to generate. They have increased by nearly £1.27 million due mainly to a large increase in cash from property sales and a growth in amounts owed us by our trade debtors.

Creditors are owed a total of £535k, a rise of 45k on last year. Creditors are the organisations or people to whom we owe money for goods and services provided. This amount includes monies owed at the end of this financial year plus any that are due beyond it.

To arrive at the Net Assets we add Fixed Assets to Current Assets and then deduct Creditors, as appropriate, to give us a figure over £7.8 million, an increase of £1.38 million on last year.

The Funds, at the bottom of the statement are the net worth of the business as at the 28/02/2019 and are, as they must be, equal to Net Assets. The Unrestricted General Funds of £626k are the free reserves of the Trust and cover for income fluctuations and provide ongoing stability. The Trust’s target for free reserves is £500k which represents 3 months of Unrestricted Funds expenditure so; obviously, this figure is acceptable.

Designated Funds, which are valued at £1.22 million are funds set up by the Trust for a variety of specific purposes. A large proportion of the Unrestricted Funds are Fixed Assets such as our HQ land and buildings, which cannot be readily turned into cash. Therefore, a Designated Capital Reserve Fund to the value of £702k exists to represent these assets. A Designated Development Fund of £439k has been created for capital or non-capital works or projects, which are deemed to advance the strategic objectives of the Trust. A Designated Fund of £18k has been created to develop the online wildlife information service for ERCCIS and another of £52k to help with building maintenance. The balance is made up from a number of smaller Designated Funds that were created for Devichoys Wood Nature Reserve, a replacement shed for the Reserves Department and improvements to the CWT website.

Income from membership accounts for over 23% of our total Unrestricted Income. This provides the Trust with a steady and secure income stream that helps us to deliver our core programmes of Terrestrial and Marine Conservation plus the support and stability that these initiatives need. Over the last seven years our overall membership income has grown from £300k to in excess of £587k.

At the end of Quarter 2 of this financial year Unrestricted Funds produced a deficit of £101k, but this result should be measured against the deficit budget figure of £151k, meaning that we made a positive variance against budget of £50k. It is anticipated that this year will not be as successful as 2018/2019 but we have strong reserves which will enable us to absorb any losses.

As previously stated, donations and legacies have continued to grow and this is true for both Restricted and

Unrestricted funds. May I, rather cheekily, take this opportunity to ask if you, your family or friends, are contemplating leaving any legacies or donations to the Trust that you contact us to tell us so. Whilst all of your kind contributions are gratefully received, unrestricted income is the most welcome as it means that the Trust can apply it to any of our charitable objectives. This means that we are in a strong position to maximise benefits for Cornwall's wildlife and wild places.

For the last three years I have made a comment about Brexit but, this year I think I will refrain. Suffice to say that as that erudite American politician Donald Rumsfeld said we have a lot of "known unknowns" to keep us occupied in the future.

The Trust has been thinking, for several years now, how best we can environmentally develop our HQ site at Five Acres & Two Burrows. We desperately need to improve the working areas and conditions for our staff, have better links with the public and find ways to generate income which is not solely reliant on grants and legacies. To this end we put out tenders to landscape architects and, following their submissions, we decided we liked the Hub & Hive concept as laid out by Lavigne Lonsdale.

The Hub would be a central public facing structure where a visitor could learn more about Cornwall and Cornish wildlife. It will house the Trust's offices, an exhibition space, meeting and conference facilities and a café. The Hub will be designed to harness, compliment and work with nature and it will provide improved work areas and facilities for staff.

The Hive will act as a reflection of the Hub comprising an open courtyard with communal space plus a cluster of perimeter workshops and business areas extending into it. It is proposed that this area will house ERCCIS, CEC and some elements of the Trust. However, the greater area of office and/or studio space will be leased / rented to Cornish organisations who share the Trust's conservation and environmental ethos. It should be noted that the Hub & Hive can be constructed on a modular basis.

In addition it is proposed that we construct a Training Centre and Workshop and this will be used for internal training and to store the Trusts plant & machinery. Additionally four workshops will be made available for external use and hire. As well as this a Bronze Age and Ecology walk has been suggested by Highways England entitled "Landscape of Ancestors" and showcasing the burial mounds at Two Barrows. This would be fully funded by HE and would enhance and improve the barrows and is planned to provide seating and viewing areas and an outside classroom

Obviously, these developments will take considerable time to come to fruition and, of course, will be dependent upon obtaining sufficient funding. The Trust is in the second stage of ESIF funding to pay for the Hive (this will not be affected by Brexit) and we should know if we have succeeded with this stage in early December. It is hoped that the Hub will attract Highways England funding from their Environment Fund for Cornwall. Should our attempts to secure this income fail we have a backup Business plan constructed with the help of Vickery Holman which will enable us to seek alternate funding and still move forward. We also need to obtain planning permission from Cornwall Council and we are in the early part of this process. To enable this, the Trust is having to pay for various assessments, surveys and advice plus a design and access statement, a demand study and architect costs. As you will surmise, the Hub and Hive is going to be expensive but I have deliberately not included costs as the Trust is still in the process of estimating them and, of course, much depends on the outcome of our funding applications. I think it is going to be very exciting.

The Hon Treasurer asked if there were any questions about the Accounts; there were none. He then recommended that members adopt the Accounts for year to 28th February 2019.

Proposed: Ian Pye (IP) Seconded: Jean Smith (JS)

The accounts were duly accepted by member vote with no abstentions.

The Hon Treasurer continued: Thank you for listening and I hope that you enjoy the rest of your day.

6. Resolutions

None

7. Questions from members

- Plans for the HQ site development; the new Hub and Hive location – HQ location to remain at Allet, maps and plans are on display in the Tin room and on the CWT website

8. Elections

(NT took the Chair)

Members standing down this year:

None

Election of Trustees to sit on Council:

(NT took the Chair)

Members standing for re-election as Trustees to sit on Council:

Ian Pye, Frank Howie and Deirdre Reeves

Proposed: Jan Pentreath Seconded: Paul Coyne Approval: Unanimous

One member is standing for election:

Karen Burrows

Proposed: Jan Pentreath Seconded: Paul Coyne Approval: Unanimous

All were block elected with unanimous approval and duly elected.

Election of Officers of the Trust:

(DE took the Chair)

President

Nick Tregenza was elected in 2018 as President is willing to continue and I commend him to you again as the President of Cornwall Wildlife Trust.

There were no other nominations.

Proposed: Dave Thomas Seconded: Dr Pamela Tompsett Approval: Unanimous

Nick Tregenza was duly elected by member vote with no abstentions.

(NT took back the Chair)

Vice President

Mark Nicholson was elected in 2018 as Vice-President is willing to continue and I commend him to you again as the Vice- President of Cornwall Wildlife Trust.

There were no other nominations.

Proposed: Ian Pye Seconded: Caroline Vulliamy Approval: Unanimous

Mark Nicholson was duly elected by member vote with no abstentions.

Honorary Treasurer

Paul Coyne was elected in 2012 as Treasurer and is willing to stand again for his final year.

There were no other nominations.

Proposed: Dee Reeves Seconded: Fred Currie Approval: Unanimous
Paul Coyne was duly elected by member vote with no abstentions.

Honorary Secretary

Daniel Eva was elected in 2013 as Hon Secretary and is willing to stand again.

There were no other nominations.

Proposed: Frank Howie Seconded: Liz Tregenza Approval: Unanimous
Daniel Eva was duly elected by member vote with no abstentions.

9. Appointment of Auditors

Nick Tregenza recommended that Robinson Reed Layton be appointed as auditors for the coming year.

Proposed: Paul Coyne Seconded: Daniel Eva Approval: Unanimous
Robinson Reed Layton was duly appointed by member vote with no abstentions.

10. Any other business

None

Nick Tregenza closed the AGM at 10.30am and introduced Stephen Warman as compere of Discovery Day.