



**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF
CPRE Wiltshire – The Countryside Charity
(Limited Liability Company number 07127110 and Charity no 1134677).
Held at 18:30 on Thursday 13th July 2022 at the Corn Exchange, Devizes.**

1. Welcome

Apologies for absence: Michael Hodges.

2. Minutes of the AGM held on 22nd September 2022.

2.1 Accuracy - Minutes Approved

2.1 Matters arising. None

3. President's address.

Our President said that it is well worth celebrating our "green and pleasant land". She was pleased that CPRE Wiltshire had been instrumental in a successful campaign to reject a planning application for a huge distribution centre on greenfield land, on the edge of an AONB, south east of Swindon. This is likely to be located on the site on the eastern edge on Swindon now vacated by Honda, which is a far more appropriate place.

She said that she very much enjoyed meeting many people when she presented awards to the winners of the Best Kept Village Competition.

Finally, she thanked all the officers of CPRE Wiltshire for their continued hard work on many campaigns.

4. Chairman's Report.

The Chairman's written report had already been made available to members (on our website and by email) and she said that she had little to add to that. She emphasised that all charities were currently under pressure on finance and membership, finding it difficult to recover from the impact of the Covid pandemic. Online meetings (using Zoom) had been useful but there was still value in meeting in person.

It was important to find the best ways of getting our message across. We should recognise that social media is an increasingly important way of doing this especially for young people.

She encouraged members to have a personal campaign attitude: "What are we leaving behind for our children and grandchildren?". In this respect we should be thinking at least 25 years ahead. Amongst issues that we should consider are: the impact of Artificial Intelligence; the fact that some beneficial aspects of our environment are being diminished; and the future of farming.

She encouraged members to engage with us and, when doing so, to think about the future of the countryside for our grandchildren.



5. Treasurer's Report.

The new Treasurer, Anthony Cohen, said that he was pleased to have taken on this office. He had published our accounts on our website and highlighted a few points. We had made a loss of about £10k in our Financial Year 22/23, partly due to a drop in the value of our investment, which now stood at about £90k, and partly due to lower income from membership and donations.

He said that we were taking steps to reduce costs and that we had fortunately received a legacy of about £9k. However we needed to recruit more members and to increase income from donations and legacies.

6. Confirmation of co-opted trustees during 2022 – 2023: Anthony Cohen (Treasurer). *Proposer: Charmian Spickernell, Seconder: Rosalind Ambler.*

7. Election and Confirmation of Trustees. In accordance with the Company/Charity's Articles of Association, one third of the elected Trustees/ Directors must retire.

- The following are due to retire: John Eaton and Andrew Longland.
- The Trustees who will continue in 2023-2024 will be: Elected: Anne Henshaw, Michael Hodges, Annabelle Sanderson, Kate Fielden and Nick Stokes.
- John Eaton has offered himself for re-election as a Trustee and Directors. *Proposer: Geraldine White, Seconder: Nick Stokes.*
- No other nominations had been received.

8. Appointment of independent examiner of accounts: P. Chow CPFA BSc (Hons). *Proposer: Anne Henshaw, Seconder: Anthony Cohen.*

9. There were no other motions for consideration at the AGM.

10. There was other business. The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and then closed the meeting.

Guest speakers.

David Holroyd – Action for Avon.

David is the Head of Water Quality for the Wiltshire Fisheries Association (WFA) and for the Salisbury and District Angling Club (SDAC) (both are voluntary posts). He has been a lifelong angler.

David pointed out that 85% of the chalk streams on the planet are in southern England. They have a high level of protection but sadly this is not currently enforced. There have been no recent prosecutions for failing to meet water quality criteria. However chalk streams are home to many species of fish, insects and mammals, and an organisation called Wildfish is now taking legal action. Surveys, mostly by voluntary bodies, are carrying out surveys and are identifying decreases in fauna and diversity, because there has been a large decrease in monitoring by the Environment Agency.



Actions underway include: partnerships with other organisations; PR campaigns; contact with local MPs; Smart Rivers monitoring; and regular engagement with the Environment Agency and Wessex Water.

In answering questions, David said that:

- Wessex Water were probably the best of a bad bunch of water companies: they were competent but needed to invest more.
- Legal action should result in improvements to sewage treatment works.
- We need more capacity to treat sewage, but we would have to pay for this.
- The Environment Agency was under-resourced.
- Privatisation, rather than public ownership, should work well but only if regulations are enforced.
- Realistically, we need lots of people to volunteer to help with monitoring.

Alan Maryon-Davies – Nadder Community Energy

Alan is the voluntary Chair of Nadder Community Energy (NCE), a Community Benefit Society incorporated in 2015.

NCE is a not for profit company, with income from solar generation of electricity and a 20-year commitment to all parties. They had made share offers in 2015 and 2018, attracting 150 investors and £612,500. Solar panels had been installed on 11 farm and commercial buildings and five schools and in total these can generate 597kW. The Society paid 5% interest. Operating profit in 2021-22 exceeded £15k.

A third share offer was underway, to install 300kW generating capacity on six schools in North Dorset.

Other related initiatives included: the Tisbury Electric Car Club, renewable heating for schools, Tisbury Eco Trail and Warmer at Home Tisbury.

NCE had links to Wiltshire Climate Alliance, Transition City Salisbury, Wessex Community Energy Network and Community Energy England.

Plans for the future included consideration of: further solar roof installations, a solar farm, a battery bank, hydropower, and wind turbines. Much will depend upon government policy, market forces and, most importantly, local opinion. Further information at www.nadderce.org.uk.

In answering questions, Alan said that:

- NCE had four contracted staff members: an administrator, a treasurer, a technical advisor and a maintenance officer. All others who were involved in running NCE are volunteers.
- A large issue was the aesthetics of solar panels, especially on roofs. Solar tiles and windows reduced this problem but are expensive.
- NCE receives support from local parish councils, notably Tisbury.