

The Exmoor Society

MINUTES

of The Exmoor Society's 60th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING Held on Saturday 21 September 2019 at Porlock Village Hall

More than 70 Members of the Exmoor Society attended the Society's 60th Annual General Meeting.

1. **Welcome & Opening Remarks:**

Mr Rod Coyne, Vice President, welcomed everyone warmly and gave Sir Antony Acland's apologies as he had been unable to attend due to other pressing commitments. A list of further apologies can be found at the end of these minutes.

2. **Minutes of the 2018 Annual General Meeting:**

Resolved that the Minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2018 (and circulated to members) be approved as correct.

All approved.

There were no matters arising.

3. **Annual Report for 2018-2019 presented by the Chairman:**

Mrs Rachel Thomas drew attention to the Year in Retrospect paper provided and made five brief points in relation to this. First was the very enjoyable 60th anniversary lunch at the end of 2018. Second, the importance the Society places on evidence-based campaigning and relating to her third point of tackling controversial subjects on this basis. This year, the Vice Chairman had conducted research into the facts on game shooting on Exmoor, which the Society continues to monitor. It had objected to a planning proposal for a hydroelectric scheme involving Hoar Oak and Farley waters and their confluence with the East Lyn at Watersmeet on the grounds of significant damage to this well-loved landscape. The Chairman's fourth point related to the successful Spring Conference and the fifth to the current spotlight on national parks with the publication of the Glover Report and the very enjoyable and successful Big Picnic, held on Exmoor, celebrating the 70th anniversary of national parks with HRH The Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall.

4. **Statement of Financial Activities and balance sheet for the year ended 31st May 2019:**

Mrs Karen Trigger, Honorary Treasurer, presented the accounts for

the year ended 31 May 2018. The total income was higher than anticipated with only one item higher than budgeted, the Transfer from Funds, which was offset by higher depreciation expenditure. The trading income had been particularly good, enhanced by the sale of studies produced during the time of the Archive project. Expenditure in total was very close to budget, although there were some individual variances. With a budget surplus of £3k, and an increase in the value of investments by over £17k, the overall surplus was £20k. A review of the investments as at 31 August showed they were still increasing in value, although nothing can be certain! Drawing attention to the Restricted & Designated funds, Mrs Trigger reported the Project Fund had been very active until its completion in September and more money had been received into the Campaign Fund, some of which had already been used appropriately. A new Designated Development Fund had been set up, enabling the Society to employ a Development Co-ordinator on a part time basis to promote the Society generally. There were no questions from the floor but Mr Chris Norrish commented on how fortunate for the Society to have such an excellent Hon Treasurer and proposed a vote of thanks that was carried unanimously.

Motion: that the Statement of financial activities and balance sheet for the year ended 31st May 2019 be received.

Proposed by Ms Lisa Eden and Seconded by Mr Nigel Hester.

Motion carried.

5. Election of President, Vice-Presidents and other Officers:

Motion: that the President, Vice Presidents and Officers stated overleaf be re-elected, and Mr Joshua Thorne be elected as a Vice President, as recommended by the Executive Committee.

Proposed by Mrs Arabella Amory and Seconded by Prof John Wibberley. Motion carried.

6. Election of Other Members of the Executive Committee:

Ms Caroline Tonson-Rye has resigned and Miss Jackie Smith does not wish to be re-elected.

Motion: that Mrs Christina Williams and Mrs Arabella Amory be re-elected and Ms Lisa Eden and Mrs Jill Edwards be elected, as recommended by the Executive Committee.

Proposed by Prof John Wibberley and Seconded by Mrs Karen Trigger. Motion carried.

Dr Keith Howe thanked both retiring Executive Committee Members for their work on behalf of the Society, although Ms Jackie Smith had

been unable to attend. Dr Howe explained the contribution each had made: Miss Smith for her engagement with young people, the links she had forged with local schools, her work on the Pinnacle Award, both the Lucy Perry Literary and the Adult Poetry Competitions, and with both Archive Projects; Ms Tonson-Rye for her work with both Archive Projects through her support of the Archivist, training of volunteers, responsibilities for continuing the archive work and dealing with enquiries, her invaluable literary knowledge and expertise in publishing, leading the Alfred Vowles Photographic Competition and being a premises keyholder and dealing with sudden emergencies. They will be greatly missed.

Mrs Rachel introduced the two new Trustees: Mrs Jill Edward and Ms Lisa Eden.

8. Any Other Business:

There was no other business.

- ❖ **The Founder's Award:** Mrs Thomas introduced Mr Steven Pugsley of Halsgrove Press, sponsor, who delivered an entertaining and incisive tribute to the achievements of the winner, Mr Hugh Thomas, who was unable to attend so the award was received by his grandchildren.
- ❖ **The Brian and Mary Chugg Conservation Award:** Dr Keith Howe thanked Mrs Mary Chugg for sponsoring this Award, presented this year by Prof John Wibberley to Adam Lockyear in recognition of his significant work for nature conservation on both Exmoor and beyond.
- ❖ **The Pinnacle Youth Award:** Prof John Wibberley introduced this year's winner, William Bolton, who gave a brief presentation of the Exmoor bee-keeping business, formerly run by his grandfather, moving hives to different locations to aid pollination, he award helping to support its continuation and growth.
- ❖ **The Adult Poetry Competition:** Mark Haworth-Booth read his winning poem, '*A January Walk on Exmoor*', to an appreciative audience.

There then followed Roger Furniss' highly enjoyable and informative talk on Exmoor's Magnificent Rivers and how they have inspired generations

of poets, writers and painters. This was kindly presented by Mr Richard McLaughlin in Roger's absence and interspersed by readings of Ted Hughes' poetry by Mark Haworth-Booth OBE.

Everyone enjoyed an excellent lunch provided by Linda Pugsley, after which Thomas Thurlow, Exmoor National Park Authority Historic Buildings Officer, gave an illustrated talk on Exmoor's historic buildings and how they provide one of the most important records of the development of construction, settlements and land use.

Rachel Thomas thanked contributors and attendees and officially closed the meeting.

Apologies: Pauline Ackland, Peter Bamber, Malcolm Bond, Lady Anne Dunboyne, Reg & Copper Howe, Atisha McGregor Auld, Robert Manley, Anne May, Susan May, Mr & Mrs Paternoster