

AGM 2025

Thursday 20 November



RE AGENDA ITEM 2 – MINUTES OF THE AGM 2024

Minutes of the 62nd Annual General Meeting of the Devon Wildlife Trust, held via video conference on Tuesday 19 November 2024 at 18.00

At least 168 members were present.

The Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees, Mike Moser, welcomed everyone and explained that the Chair of the Board of Trustees, Vicky Pope, was unable to attend due to illness. Mike Moser chaired the meeting. Also present on screen were the Honorary Treasurer, Rebecca Bower and the Chief Executive, Nick Bruce-White.

Holding a virtual AGM was permitted by DWT's Articles of Association. Details of how to vote and how to ask questions during the meeting had been provided in advance of this meeting and the Vice Chair re-iterated them. Questions were taken during the meeting and in the Open Forum that immediately followed it.

The Vice Chair of the Board declared the meeting open. The meeting was quorate.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Mark Lawrence and Sara Papworth.

2. Minutes of the 2023 AGM held on 16 November

The Vice Chair called for a vote as to whether the Minutes of the 2023 AGM were a true record. The majority being in favour, the Minutes were duly approved.

3. Trustees' Annual Report

The Vice Chair reminded members that the Trustees' Annual Report, which was a legal requirement, was contained within the full accounts, on pages 3-23. The Vice Chair presented an overview of the range of Devon Wildlife Trust's activities during 2023-24.

4. Audited Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2024 and the Auditors' Report

The Hon Treasurer, Rebecca Bower, presented some key points.

The Accounts were for Devon Wildlife Trust and its two subsidiaries, Devon Wildlife Enterprises Limited and the Warren Crocus Co Limited. Devon Wildlife Services had been dissolved in December 2023 as it was no longer needed.

The Group's income had totalled £ 6,074,111 and expenditure £6,222,164. The result at year end was a small deficit of -£46,527. Although a deficit might seem concerning, this was planned and agreed by the Trustees in advance. Unrestricted reserves had been used to fund important strategic priorities for the organisation. After this planned spend, restricted reserves remained at a healthy level of £2.5m (excluding assets), enabling DWT to plan confidently for the future. Assets had increased, reflecting, amongst other things, investment in the exciting Bowden Pillars project. Income had performed extremely well. Membership remained the biggest source of

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income. Expenditure on DWT's charitable activities had grown again, the main areas being Nature Reserves, Landscape Scale Conservation and Advocacy, Education and Engagement.

The Hon Treasurer said that the Group had achieved a clean audit, had a good track record of high quality and compliant fundraising activity, charitable income and membership numbers continued to grow, financial reserves remained healthy and a robust financial Reserves Policy was in place.

Challenges ahead included that:

- The nature and climate crises were not becoming any less severe – the imperative to halt biodiversity decline, recover nature and reduce carbon emissions had never been greater.
- Whilst the new government had stated a bold ambition on nature recovery, recent public spending announcements could pose risks for wildlife, for instance through a flatlining of the nature-friendly farming budget.
- Along with many other employers (including other Wildlife Trusts), DWT faced significant cost increases following a period of sustained high inflation.

DWT was in a good position to tackle the challenges ahead, not just financially but because of the support and commitment of its members, for which the Hon Treasurer thanked all those present.

The Hon Treasurer proposed that the Audited Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2024 be adopted. The Vice Chair called for a vote and the majority being in favour, the Accounts were duly adopted.

5. Election of Board members

The Board nominated Rebecca Broad for re-election to the Board of Trustees.

The Vice Chair proposed that Rebecca Broad be re-elected and called for a vote. The majority being in favour, Rebecca Broad was re-elected.

The Board nominated Abby Allen, Martha Hall and Koy Thomson for election to the Board of Trustees.

The Vice Chair proposed that Abby Allen be elected and called for a vote. The majority being in favour, Abby Allen was elected. The Vice Chair proposed that Martha Hall be elected and called for a vote. The majority being in favour, Martha Hall was elected. The Vice Chair proposed that Koy Thomson be elected and called for a vote. The majority being in favour, Koy Thomson was elected.

Andrew Burns and Mike Moser were both retiring from the Board at this meeting and the Chief Executive presented, on behalf of the absent Chair of the Board, a tribute and thank you in recognition of the contribution of both to the Trust's continued success.

6. Appointment of the Auditors

The Hon Treasurer proposed that Bishop Fleming be appointed as the Trust's Auditors and that the members authorise the Board to fix their remuneration. The Vice Chair called for a vote and the majority being in favour, the proposal was duly approved.

The Vice Chair closed the formal meeting at 1840.