



Kent, Surrey and Sussex Branch

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Zoom at 1900hrs on Wednesday, 23 September 2020

Present: **Committee Members**
David Warburton (Chair)
Conrad Chapman
Graham Godfrey
Toby Athersuch
Sheila Jalalpour
Dafydd Lewis
Ralph Manly

Fellows/Members/Associates

Julie Allard
Nigel Brown
Elizabeth Byaruhanga
Tanya Conway-Grim
Rosalind Cook
Keith Dakin-White
Mark Downs
Jamie Holland
Pamela Hunter
Alan Lansdown
Amanda McGowan
Roger Prentis
Jim Scudamore
Benjamin Seery
Christopher Suter
Alfred Thumser

In Attendance

Bethany Morgan (Royal Society of Biology)
Karen Patel (Royal Society of Biology)

Apologies for absence

Bob Park

1. The Chair, David Warburton, opened the meeting by welcoming all members.
2. The Minutes of the AGM of the 2 May, 2019 were considered without correction or comment. Graham Godfrey proposed that the Minutes be accepted and this was seconded by Conrad Chapman. The Minutes were therefore passed as being a fair and correct account of the meeting.
2. There were no matters arising from these Minutes.
3. The Chair then gave a brief tribute to David Ware, the Branch Secretary, who had sadly passed away since the last AGM and who had done so much on behalf of the Branch and the

Royal Society of Biology (RSB). This service had been recognized by the award to David of the Society's President's Medal just before he died.

He then gave a summary of the Events that had taken place since the previous AGM in May 2019.

On the 26 May 2019, Holborough Marshes Nature Reserve was visited where Stephen Weeks, the Estate Manager of this Kent Wildlife Trust SSSI, gave a very good guided tour.

On the 12 June 2019, the National Trust property of Polesden Lacey was visited where three guided tours were undertaken, starting with a brief 'highlight tour' of the house and contents, then moving onto a tour of the wilder areas of the estate, with the Area Ranger, followed by a tour of the cultivated gardens in quite heavy rain. It was a successful visit with lots of content and lunch in the middle.

On the 2 September 2019, Knepp Castle Estate in Sussex, a rewilding project, initiated 20 years ago, was visited. Twenty-two Branch members had a tour of the estate in two 4X4 troop carrier, open sided vehicles, stopping off at various places to get closer to nature or to climb up to platforms in the trees.

On 27 September 2019 a talk and tour of the Diptera collection of the Natural History Museum by Zoe Jay Adams took place as a joint event with London Branch. Dafydd Lewis reported that while the majority of attendees were from the London Branch it was nevertheless a successful, well attended and enjoyable event.

On 12 October 2019, the Branch annual Fungal Foray took place at The Chantries led by Nick Baxter. The visit was deemed a success and a species list of those fungi observed is on the Branch website.

He urged members to read the various reports published in the Biologist if they wanted further details.

With respect to Events that were being planned for the 2019-2020 year he explained that the lockdowns and other restrictions associated with COVID 19 had resulted in all Events, most of which were in the planning and enquiry stages at the time, had been cancelled.

It was hoped that some of these Events could be run at some point in 2021 if restrictions were eased or lifted. It was also planned to run some online events until this happened.

4. The Chair then invited Ralph Manly, the Treasurer to report on the Branch finances. He reported that the Branch Account stood at £1040.30 as the only outgoings had been for meeting room and travel costs for the 22 January, 2020 Committee meeting. He explained that we had been given an original allocation for the year of £1250, rather than the previous £1000, in recognition of the large size of our Committee and therefore greater administration costs. Sheila Jalalpour proposed that the accounts be accepted and this was seconded by Graham Godfrey. The accounts were approved.
5. Under nominations for Committee Members, David Warburton indicated that Hayley Andrews had indicated that she did not wish to stand for re-election to the Committee. He also stated that David Donaldson had not attended meetings for some time and he had not responded to communications so it was assumed that he also did not wish to stand for re-election. However, he as Chair, Graham Godfrey as Deputy Chair, Ralph Manly as Treasurer and Conrad Chapman, Toby Athersuch and Sheila Jalalpour as Committee members had all indicated their willingness to stand for re-election. Their nominations were proposed by Pam Hunter and seconded by Christopher Suter and all were duly re-elected. Ralph Manly then nominated Dafydd Lewis for the post of Branch Secretary and this was seconded by Conrad Chapman and Dafydd was duly elected.

An invitation had previously been issued on behalf of the Branch by RSOB Head Office prior to the AGM indicating that two places were available on the Committee and welcoming

applications from members. One application had been received from Benjamin Seery, who was in attendance at the meeting. At the invitation of the Chair, Benjamin gave a brief summary of his professional background and other interests. Ralph Manly proposed his nomination to the Committee and this was seconded by Toby Athersuch and Benjamin was duly elected.

6. Under Any Other Business Professor Nigel Brown, who is Chair of the College of Individual Members and therefore has oversight of the Branches for the RSB Council gave a brief report on the Society's current policies and activities, particularly in view of the current pandemic and the resultant operational restrictions and offered his and the Society's continued support to Branches in these difficult time. He also indicated his appreciation of the Staff at RSB Head Office who were doing an excellent job under difficult circumstances.

Ralph Manly then read out a brief tribute to David Ware written by Bob Park, a Branch member, for whom David had once worked as a post-doctoral Research Fellow.

David Warburton then gave a vote of thanks on behalf of the Branch to Bethany Morgan and Karen Patel from RSB Head Office, who had both been of great help in the organization and running of the AGM.

7. There being no further business, the Chair closed the meeting. Graham Godfrey then introduced the speaker Dr Toby Athersuch of Imperial College, London who gave a talk entitled 'Making Sense of the Metabolic Milieu: Methods for Characterising the Human Exposome'. After the talk and questions from the audience, Alan Lansdown proposed a vote of thanks to the speaker.