

**MINUTES OF 85<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY DORSET CPRE AGM, HELD AT THE  
CERNE ABBAS VILLAGE HALL, CERNE ABBAS, ON  
SATURDAY 19<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2022**

**1. Welcome**

Peter Neal, Vice-President, opened the Meeting at 11 am and warmly welcomed 61 members and guests. He said it has been a sad year following the passing of volunteers who made a huge contribution to our campaigns.

**2. Apologies**

Mrs Audrey Cowen, Mr Shaun Leavey, Mr Robin SeQueira, Capt. Dickie Bird & Mrs Barbara Bird, Mrs Jennifer Warren-Peachey, Mr Gerald Rigler, Mr David Prichard, Mrs Gay Hanbury, Mr Roger White & Mr John Boodle, Mr John Clevely, Mrs Felicity Gardner, Mr Paul Timberlake, Mr Colin Brixton, Dr John Larkin, Mr Giles Watts, Mr Nicholas Whitsun-Jones, Mr Steve O'Connell, Ms Deirdre Flegg

**3. Minutes of the 2021 AGM**

The Chair asked if there were any amendments to these minutes. There were none. Proposer Neil Matthews, seconder Dr Frances Hogwood, all in favour, none against.

**4. Matters arising from the Minutes**

**Proposed Waste Incinerator at Portland Port**

Recently the Minerals and Waste Planning Manager confirmed that this would be the sole application to be considered on a full day meeting of the Strategic and Technical Planning Committee but the actual date is still not known. Natural England has objected and the applicants have not asked for more time to challenge their report which is a major positive.

**5. Chair of Trustees' Report**

Peter Bowyer started by saying a big thank you to our administrator, volunteers, Vice-Presidents and Trustees. We would not be where we are today without their support and consistent commitment.

Peter gave an overview of our work over the past year starting with the Dorset Council Local Plan. Our response to the Local Plan was prepared by Jo Witherden, a Dorset Planning Consultant. She also completed initial work on a report into whether exceptional circumstances could be applied in Dorset given the county's exceptional environment, landscape and heritage. In an environmentally constrained areas such as Dorset, meeting housing needs has the potential to cause a highly adverse impact on the environment. Dorset is a special county and we have our work cut out to get this point across.

In December 2021 we launched a School Award's Scheme the 'Barbara Vance Countryside Prize' for 6<sup>th</sup> Form students, in 19 secondary schools and colleges. We had a disappointing response. The Trustees are looking to move this initiative forward, by promoting it as an education award that will contribute to life-long learning and reflect the aims of CPRE as an environmental charity. We welcome any new ideas.

Peter also made reference to our clarity of purpose and grants offered. We need to think carefully how activities enhance the countryside. He recommended reading "Next to Nature" by Ronald Blythe that highlights the pattern of change in the seasons over time, for example, we now have milder weather into November and hot summers.

Moving onto current issues, we hold monthly online Planning Group Meetings. Recently we discussed the six Key Strategic issues related to the Dorset Council Local Plan namely: 1) Housing numbers, 2) Affordable Homes, 3) Nutrient neutrality, 4) Landscape, Heritage and Exceptional Circumstances, 5) Food, Climate and Ecological Emergency and 6) Community participation & engagement. We are looking to produce policy type papers to inform decision makers and these papers could be part of an alternative approach and vision for Dorset.

As part of a review of Dorset CPRE, we conducted a survey to help better understand member and supporter experiences and interests. This will help us to provide the information and services that you are most passionate about. A summary of the results is printed in our autumn magazine. We will be looking at and carefully considering the results and will take these into account as we go forward.

Dorset is becoming part of a transformation with a move to renewable energy and installing solar panels on land that was once farmed. As part of that transformation, we need to protect special features within our rural county. Peter referred to two books for further reading: "Edible Economics" by Ha-Joon Chang and "Unstoppable Us" by Yuval Noah Harari.

## 6. **Treasurer's Report**

Richard Norman said he offered his help to complete the year-end accounts when the Treasurer resigned in July. Richard summarised the Accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022. Expenditure is down on last year and within budget. To provide more support to the branch, we will look at recruiting a suitable person to work on areas including consultations and planning.

We invested the 2020 legacy with Punter Southall Wealth in 2021 after receiving professional advice. Following a difficult year in the financial markets, there has been a drop in the value of our investments not only with Punter Southall Wealth (now Canaccord Genuity Wealth Management) but also the COIF Charity Funds and the small Barclays Wealth holding. The Fixed Income sector has taken a battering. In October 2022 the Trustees met with James Knowles, Investment Director and Head of Fixed Interest at Canaccord Genuity Wealth and our adviser, to review our investment objectives and current risk profile and strategy. The cautious approach to investing the legacy has helped to limit the losses. It is hoped there will be better returns on our investments over the next three years. The current investment strategy is for a balanced outcome with an emphasis on income in future years.

Richard asked if there were any questions on the Accounts and there were none. The Accounts were accepted. Proposer Richard Nicholls, Seconder Peter Neal, all in favour, none against.

**7. Election of Examiners**

Our Examiners, Scott Vevers in Bridport, were proposed by Richard Norman, seconded by Peter Neal, all in favour, none against.

**8. Election of Officers**

The following were duly proposed and elected en bloc, proposer Sir Christopher Coville and seconder Linda Poulsen, all in favour, none against:

<b>Position</b>	<b>Proposed</b>	<b>Proposer</b>	<b>Seconder</b>
<b>President</b>	Edward Fox	Sandra Brown	Gerald Rigler
<b>Vice-Presidents</b>	Richard Nicholls	Dr David Peacock	Dr Guy Dickinson
	Peter Neal	Rupert Hardy	Sir Christopher Coville
	Richard Norman	Peter Neal	Dr Guy Dickinson
	Dr John Larkin	Peter Bowyer	Gerald Rigler
<b>Trustees</b>	Dr Guy Dickinson	Peter Neal	Richard Nicholls
	Peter Bowyer	Gerald Rigler	Sandra Brown
	Neil Matthews	Peter Bowyer	Linda Poulsen
	Dr Frances Hogwood	Alistair Chisholm	Linda Poulsen
	Bob Bowmer (Hon. Treasurer)	Richard Norman	Neil Matthews

Bob Bowmer was introduced and will be added as a new bank signatory.

We are two Trustees light after Jane Westbrook and Steve O' Connell decided not to stand again. Dr Guy Dickinson, who has served six years, has offered to stay on for another year while we look to co-opt additional Trustees.

We would love to hear from members if interested in becoming a Trustee or know of anyone with enthusiasm, skills and experience who could make a real difference.

The Chair and Vice-Chair are elected at the next Trustees Meeting on 9th December.

9. **CPRE Awards**

Today we recognised the special contribution of two of our long-standing volunteers.

Dr David Peacock received 'The CPRE Special Contribution and Long Service Award', for his tireless commitment in researching and producing detailed reports on current and future renewable energy generation in Dorset and UK. His knowledge is invaluable when responding to policy and planning issues.

Rupert Hardy was presented with 'The CPRE Promoting Rural Life Award' for his leadership and energetic campaigning to promote rural life and Dorset's food and drink producers, judging the Best Village Shop competition, organising events and contributing well-received articles.

10. **Resolution:** No resolutions were tabled this year.

11. **Any Other Business and Questions from members**

The importance of land use and strengthening the provision for food production was mentioned. With the increase of mental illness in 12–18-year-olds, and the therapeutic benefits of being outdoors, could we support education for young people on farming practices such as hedge planting? CPRE Hampshire, in partnership with professional hedge layers, are offering two 3-month traineeships in the traditional craft of hedge laying, including planting and coppice management.

Reference was made to the recent refusal of a solar farm in the Dorset AONB. The area has been designated for a purpose and it is important that the designation is not compromised by large scale developments to address the energy crisis. The importance of Green Belt designation was also raised.

A member mentioned national campaigns and how they are supported, a minority may not agree with the overall position. Peter Bowyer mentioned the new CPRE Assembly where there is the potential to convey viewpoints to other local CPREs and National CPRE. This is all part of the articulation, listening more and capturing a range of views and this may lead to a more informed decision. Please do make your views and feelings known on local issues and individual planning proposals, either to stop or approve it, and share with your local CPRE group.

CPRE is favourably regarded by Minister and Officials due to strength of evidence in our reports and value of contribution from local areas.

A vote of thanks was expressed to Peter Neal and the Sherborne & District Society CPRE for supporting the Sherborne Steam and Waterwheel Centre's application for section 106 funding to enhance the visitor centre.

The meeting was followed by a presentation by Dr George McGavin, entomologist and author. George provided a wide-ranging, thought-provoking presentation and discussion on how vital it is to address the crises of habitat and species loss and climate change.