

CCB CYMDEITHAS ERYRI the SNOWDONIA SOCIETY AGM
Held on Saturday 19 October 2019 at Plas y Brenin

MINUTES

Present:

Trustees: David Archer (Chair) Sue Beaumont, Netti Collister, Charles Hawkins, Bob Lowe, Jane Parry-Evans, Julian Pitt

Members: 37 members.

Staff: Judith Bellis, Daniel Goodwin, John Harold, Claire Holmes, Mary-Kate Jones Debbie Pritchard, Mary Williams.

Apologies were received from:

Jacob Buis, Morag McGrath, Margaret Thomas, Max Grant, Peter Weston *and 17 other members*

1. The minutes of the Annual General Meeting held in 2018 were approved. Proposed by David Firth and seconded by Sue Beaumont.

2. **Matters arising**
 - i. No identified matters arising.

3. **Chair's report, David Archer**
 - i. DA thanked the members for attending and for their support and involvement in the Society's work.
 - ii. This will be DA's last report as Chairman of the Snowdonia Society after 7 years. Thanked staff and trustees.
 - iii. Determined member recruitment drive and legacies has secured the outlook of the Society.
 - iv. New Minister, Hannah Blythyn's Valued and Resilient report, confirmed that all existing designated landscapes will be retained. There had been wide recognition, including by Welsh National Park Authorities, of the vital part played by Society members who had written individually to the Minister during the Society's campaign work on this issue.
 - v. Helping Hands project: Volunteers have clocked up 4,200 hours in the last 12 months. MaD weekend attracted 125 supporters. None of this would happen without dedicated staff. Mary-Kate Jones, Dan Goodwin and Mary Williams.
 - vi. Events programme grows from strength to strength. 45 varied events and over 800 participants. Has led to new members and donations. This is a tribute to Claire Holmes the Engagement Officer.
 - vii. Tŷ Hyll continues to attract 40 000 visitors per year. We have been hugely indebted to Margaret Thomas for management, care, repairs and improvement of Tŷ Hyll with her husband Max Grant. Margaret is standing down after 14 years as a trustee. She will be sorely missed. Margaret will continue to fundraise through the sales of seeds and plants. MW has been appointed to a warden/caretaker' role at Ty Hyll in addition to her conservation role.
 - viii. CH standing down as vice-Chair and resigning as a trustee. Thanks was given for his valued and committed contribution and bringing fresh thinking to the Society.
 - ix. The Society has been fortunate in attracting a new trustee, Sue Beaumont, who will be formally elected in agenda item 9.

- x. From April 2020 there will be a small increase in membership fees after 5 years since the last increase. Details of these increases are set out in the autumn 2019 magazine. This money will be well spent in protecting the beauty and diversity of Snowdonia.
- xi. Thanks given to Debbie, the Membership and Communications Officer who manages the office and interest of members. She is also part of the brilliant magazine editorial team.
- xii. Thanks also given to members for feedback and contribution to the magazine. Sir Simon Jenkins Vice-President wrote “with thanks for yet another admirable edition of the Society’s journal” and enclosed a significant financial contribution.
- xiii. A word about our new President, Roger Thomas. He very much regrets that he can’t be with us today but asked me to say that he feels honoured to be elected as President and looks forward to taking up the role.
- xiv. DA has had the pleasure of working with John for over five years and during this time the Society has grown, largely due to John’s drive and dedication. He leads a committed, enthusiastic and happy team.
- xv. Standing down as Chair DA believes that Julian Pitt, is the ideal person to take up the reins.

4. Project Manager’s report, Mary-Kate Jones

- i. Mary-Kate Jones gave a brief summary of the Project’s work during the year:
 - 4,424 volunteering hours
 - 82km footpaths maintained
 - 3ha rhododendron cleared
 - 123 conservation days
 - 3,000 trees planted
 - 1,450kg of litter collected including 860 plastic bottles
- ii. Thanks given to Owain who has now left the Snowdonia Society. Welcome to Mary Williams who replaced Owain Thomas. Thanks given to Dan who worked hard over summer to keep up with the practical work.

5. Director's Report, John Harold

- i. John outlined the links between our Society’s purpose, our strategic goals and the evolving work on the Action Plan which sets out how these link to our day to day work.
- ii. Putting ideas into motion takes effort; John drew attention to the extensive, largely invisible work behind the scenes to deliver our practical work, our policy work and our public engagement, and gave his thanks to the team and to volunteers and partner organisations who make this possible.
- iii. Upcoming projects: Carneddau project, slate trail, Snowdon litter project. Supporting communities. Lots of work on the horizon.
- iv. Engagement: This is where we get our future members. Activities with young members of the community e.g. schools.
- v. Pleased to say that the membership numbers are moving in the right direction.
- vi. Members were invited to put ideas forward and come and talk to us about how the Society can strengthen.
- vii. A key challenge now is retaining traditional forms of land management What would be lost if we lose traditional farming? What will be the effect Example given of the Snowdon beetle,

found only in a tiny area, its food plant is wild thyme, and extensive upland grazing is essential to its future prospects.

- viii. Thanks given to DA for his patience, thoughtfulness, quiet and knowledgeable input and direction over the last 5.5 years. Glad to say that he is not quite getting away as he is staying on as a trustee.

6. Finance Report, Judith Bellis

DA introduced Judith Bellis, accountant.

- i. An ongoing problem with HSBC bank Direct Debits was explained. A number of Direct Debits had not been collected by the bank. HSBCs repeated failure to address the problem meant that there was little alternative other than to report the matter to the financial ombudsman – with the intention of switching banks once this has been resolved.
- ii. Accounts summary was explained to members. Full accounts are available on the website and a summary was sent out with the magazine.
- iii. Positive points to highlight were that membership figures have increased slightly and there had been continued success in securing grant funding for practical work.
- iv. Thanked members for their contribution to the Society.

7. Questions to Director and Officers

DA invited questions at the end of the conference.

8. Adoption of Reports and Accounts

i. Motion to adopt the Annual Report and Accounts for the year ending 30th June 2019

The motion to adopt the 2018/19 Annual Report and summary of the accounts for the year ending 30 June 2019 was proposed by Bob Lowe, seconded by David Firth and carried *nem con*.

ii. Motion to reappoint Bennet Brooks as independent examiners of the Society's Accounts for 2019/20

A motion to appoint Bennett Brooks as independent examiners of the Society's accounts for 2019/20 was proposed by Bob Lowe, seconded by Julian Pitt, and carried *nem con*.

9. Election of Officers and Members of the Executive Committee

The election of all of the following was approved (proposed by Netti Collister, seconded by Christine Lewis, and carried *nem con*):

- President: Roger Thomas.
- Vice-presidents: His Honour Huw Morgan Daniel CVO, KStJ, David Firth, Sir John Houghton, Sir Simon Jenkins, Dr Morag McGrath.
- Chair: Julian Pitt.
- Trustees: David Archer, Sue Beaumont, Netti Collister. Bob Lowe and Paul Nickson.

10. Any Other Business

- i. DA paid a tribute to Warren Martin a long-standing member who recently passed away.
- ii. JP spoke a few words as new Chair. He is privileged to work with dedicated trustees and excellent team of staff. Very committed to his role as Chair for the Snowdonia Society. He showed his gratitude to the trustees for the knowledge and help during his time as trustee.
- iii. NC spoke a few words to thanked DA for his time as Chair. DA has gone the extra mile for the Society and it is hugely appreciated. There has been an unprecedented calm in the society due to the goodwill and the communication between trustees and staff. A huge thank you. Presentation of gift to DA.

11. Date of Next AGM: 17th October 2020 (provisional)

Following the closure of formal business, questions from members were answered by trustees and staff, with questions on the use of drones in the National Park and on how the Society can advocate for and act to improve the provision and use of more sustainable forms of transport.