

**CYMDEITHAS ERYRI the SNOWDONIA SOCIETY AGM**  
**Held on Saturday 9 October 2021 online**

**MINUTES**

**Present:**

President: Roger Thomas

Trustees: Julian Pitt (Chair), David Archer, Sue Beaumont, Jane Parry-Evans, Jacob Buis, Dennis McAteer, Richard Neale, Mathew Teasdale

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

Ordinary Members: nineteen members.

Introduction by Roger Thomas, President of the Snowdonia Society.

- Tribute given to the Chair, staff, trustees and volunteers of the Snowdonia Society for their excellent work.

**1. Apologies were received from:**

Bob Lowe, Richard Brunstrom and seven members

- 2.** The minutes of the Annual General Meeting held in 2020 were approved as a true record. Proposed by David Bird and seconded by Netti Collister. No matters arising were raised.

**3. Chair's report, Julian Pitt**

- i. The Chair's review of the year had been made available on the Society website, as part of the Trustees' Annual Report and Accounts. Members were encouraged to read this if they had not already done so, and JP spoke on a few points.
- ii. JP commended the staff for working resiliently and creatively with the repercussions of the pandemic.
- iii. He singled out a key policy & campaigning issue - the Director's ongoing efforts through the Yr Wyddfa partnership to make substantial progress to secure a long-term sustainable transport plan for this congested part of the National Park.
- iv. In July last year the Society responded to a consultation to proposed changes to airspace management around Llanbedr airfield. In September 2021, the Civil Aviation Authority approved the proposal subject to stringent conditions limiting the number of days that experimental aircraft will be able to fly inland and over the National Park.
- v. The Society will be following the progress of Welsh Government's Roads Review, notably in relation to the Llanbedr bypass, and seek to ensure the final decision on whether to build it is not rushed through without rigorous consideration of all the relevant issues.
- vi. A new policy on ethical investment is in the final stages of drafting. This will be included in the Society's Written Investment Policy which will be available to members.
- vii. A small task group of staff and trustees have started work to consider options on the future of Tŷ Hyll.
- viii. Tribute was paid to Morag McGrath who recently passed away. The autumn magazine included a heartfelt tribute to her written by David Firth. Her obituary underlined the

importance of the Society's work in helping to inspire and support younger generations to care and campaign in future for special places like Snowdonia in the way that Morag did.

#### **4. Caru Eryri / Care for Snowdonia report, Daniel Goodwin and Claire Holmes**

- i. Dan Goodwin gave a presentation and summary of the achievements of the Caru Eryri / Care for Snowdonia scheme of which the stats are impressive. We have had to adapt the way we work. A big thank you given to all of our volunteers and a particular thank you to David Bird who has volunteered multiple times each week. We were also involved with the Carneddau Landscape Partnership and our focus was on the balsam eradication work. Thanks given to Rob and Netti Collister for their role in the Rowen area.
- ii. Claire gave a presentation about the digital side of the Caru Eryri / Care for Snowdonia scheme and the achievements in reaching a wide audience through an online and social media information campaigns. The messages to promote responsible visiting complement positive messaging through our volunteers' practical conservation work.

#### **5. Director's Report, John Harold**

- i. John offered a wider perspective on the work reported on in the year. His presentation showed stats on key indicators over 10 and 20 year timelines. A graph of expenditure, reserves and income over the last 20 years showed the long-term recovery of reserves from the impacts of the financial crisis of 2007/8 and the current coronavirus pandemic. In terms of its reserves, the Society is back in a resilient place, reflecting a combination of global trends and prudent management and governance. Crucially, a solid foundation of reserves means that staff and trustees are able to focus on delivering our work.
- ii. Reserves are important, but our most important resources are our people - members, trustees, volunteers and staff. We've already heard about the excellent delivery of practical work by our staff and volunteers and the engagement work reaching out to wide audiences.
- iii. With more staff capacity we can do more of our work. The Society's staff capacity has increased significantly over the past decade, reflected in the ambitions for and achievement by our practical work and public engagement programmes.
- iv. Membership had been on an upward trajectory for several years up to January 2020. There has been a modest decline in membership since then. This reflects our reliance on face-to-face recruitment, halted by the pandemic for the year under consideration. There is reason to expect the modest drop in members numbers to be reversed as activities are carefully and responsibly geared up again. The experience of delivering engagement online during the pandemic gives us confidence to look forward to delivering mixed programmes of online and in-person activities, with member recruitment being carried out in more diverse ways than before.
- v. The Society is very fortunate to have skilled trustees to help with advocacy work – writing letters, responding to consultations and communicating with decision makers. This vital work largely takes place out of sight, but it is nevertheless a key part of our identity as an organization. That identity is evidenced through our advocacy, our practical work and our public engagement.
- vi. Through changing times, our members have been constant in their love and care for Snowdonia. The Director reminded all present that those who give to the Society today –

members, volunteers, trustees and staff – are the ‘golden thread’ which links the 54 years of the Society’s history with the Society’s future.

vii.

## **6. Finance Report, Judith Bellis**

- i. A summary of our financial position was included with the Autumn magazine and the full accounts are available on our website or on request from the office.
- ii. The financial year end will be changed from 30<sup>th</sup> June to the 31<sup>st</sup> of March in line with the tax year and also with most grant cycles. The next accounts will therefore cover the 9 months from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2021 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022.
- iii. The AGM must be held within 6 months of the financial year end, so the next AGM will take place before 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022.
- iv. The Society will change banks from HSBC to the Co-Op as soon as possible.
- v. We are carefully moving to a more ethically based investment portfolio, as JP had already highlighted.
- vi. This is the first full year of implementation of the increased rates of membership subscriptions. Subscription income is up compared to the previous year. Membership numbers are slightly down, but the increase in the level of subscription has compensated for this in income terms.
- vii. The value of our investment portfolio has recovered from a pandemic-related low and is now higher than in 2019.
- viii. Thanks given to our members for their continued support.

## **7. Questions to Director and Officers**

A question was raised about ways of recruiting new members. Useful suggestions and discussion followed.

A question was raised regarding the Society’s position on Path upgrades as highlighted by two contrasting articles in the latest Magazine. The Director responded by highlighting that these issues come up regularly and the Society continues to push for both better consultation and location-sensitive specification for works on footpaths.

Members were encouraged to send any further questions via email.

## **8. Adoption of Reports and Accounts**

### *i. Motion to adopt the Annual Report and Accounts for the year ending 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021*

The motion to adopt the 2020/21 Annual Report and summary of the accounts for the year ending 30 June 2021 was proposed by Netti Collister, seconded by Sian Turner and carried *nem con*.

### *ii. Motion to reappoint Bennet Brooks as independent examiners of the Society’s Accounts for 2021/22*

A motion to appoint Bennett Brooks as independent examiners of the Society’s accounts for 2021/22 was proposed by David Archer, seconded by Netti Collister, and carried *nem con*.

## **9. Election of Officers and Members of the Executive Committee**

The election of all of the following was proposed by Kate Ashbrook, seconded by David Archer, and carried *nem con*:

- President: Roger Thomas.
- Vice-presidents: His Honour Huw Morgan Daniel CVO, KStJ, David Firth, Sir Simon Jenkins.

The re-election of all of the following trustees was proposed by Netti Collister, seconded by Richard Bridges, and carried *nem con*:

- Julian Pitt as Chair, Sue Beaumont as Vice-Chair, David Archer and Bob Lowe.

## **10. Any Other Business**

None was notified.

## **11. Date of Next AGM: 24<sup>th</sup> September 2022**