

Butterfly Conservation

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Branch – Minutes of the 2020 Annual General Meeting

Wednesday 11th November 2020

Via Zoom webinar

The AGM started at 19:30. Clive Wood, Chair, welcomed the 58 members who were able to join the meeting. All votes reported in the Minutes were undertaken using the interactive 'poll' function available through the Zoom webinar, and worked very well.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Bob Whitmarsh.

2. Minutes of the 2019 Annual General Meeting

The minutes of the 2019 Annual General Meeting were unanimously confirmed as an accurate record.

Proposed: Arthur Greenwood. **Seconded:** Mary Macmillan

3. Matters arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising.

4. Presentation of Accounts

Clive Wood presented the accounts for 2019/20. The accounts had been independently audited and approved by BC Head Office who had advised that members were no longer required to formally approve them. They were therefore presented for information only.

Total income was £15,474 which was 8% lower than 2018/2019. This was mainly due to a lower level of donations and the continued and expected decline in sales of the Butterfly Walks book.

Total Expenditure was £7,771 (excl. Restricted Funds). This is 34% lower than 2018/19. This was mainly because 2018/19 expenditure was higher than usual due to prior year costs. The 2019/20 total is more representative of Branch annual expenditure.

Subscription income covers the cost of running the Branch. Surplus income (approximately £7.7k in 2019/20) is used to fund conservation work and our Volunteer Development and Education Officer.

The cash position at the end of 2019/20 was a healthy £65,125, which is an increase of 7% on the previous year. This enables the Branch to support three core aims: our Wild in

Winchester education work; building volunteer capacity and implementing a refreshed conservation strategy.

Committed expenditure for 2020/21 totals £17,000. This includes the full Year 1 costs of the Branch Volunteer Development & Education Officer.

5. Chair's Report including changes to the Main Committee

Clive gave an update on the main achievements of the Branch in 2020:

- Kate Barrett began working as our **Volunteer Development and Education** Officer on April 1st. Despite lockdown restrictions and school closures stopping all educational visits to Magdalen Hill Down, and Kate being furloughed in May and June, she is now laying good foundations for the future.
- Clive shared the funding model for Kate's role. The Branch contribution is £23,000 over three years, of which £16,000 was committed in 2020 due to the closure of external funding streams caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.
- **The Branch has refreshed its approach to conservation.** Andy Barker, Penny Jeffreys, Elaina Whittaker-Slark and Clive Wood had formed a small working group to determine the direction of future conservation work. The proposal is to establish a range of collaborative partnerships, primarily with public-sector bodies and NGOs, for the benefit of Lepidoptera in general and the wider natural environment. Alternative approaches had been considered but it was felt that a partnership model made the best use of scarce resources and would be the most effective strategy going forward. This approach would build upon the successful collaboration between the Branch, the MoD and Hampshire & IoW Wildlife Trust (HIWWT) for the Marsh Fritillary re-introduction.
- Clive has been working with **Corhampton Golf Club** to create bare chalk scrapes and new butterfly habitat across the course. It was pleasing to note that the Small Blue had occupied the new scrapes within a year of their creation.
- Conservation work has continued for the **Striped Lychnis** moth in Winchester and the extremely rare **Reddish Buff** moth on the Isle of Wight. The latter was in partnership with the HIWWT.
- Habitat management on **Up Somborne Down** has resulted in a quadrupling of butterflies recorded over the last three years.
- Clive gave an update on the **Marsh Fritillary** project. There has been evidence of dispersal in the landscape this year, which is very encouraging.
- **Branch membership** continues to grow and now stands at 1804 active households (2433 individuals).
- The Branch's **social media** presence has been greatly improved by Freya Brown, who has taken up the role of Social Media Editor.
- Clive thanked the team of **volunteers**, led by Mary Macmillan, who did a fantastic job of preparing the 1800 newsletters and Annual Butterfly Reports for posting in the midst of social distancing, office closures and other pandemic-related challenges.
- The number of people participating in the **2020 Big Butterfly Count** was up from 2019 and approximately double the number of butterflies were recorded (97,000). Over 7,000 counts were submitted by over 3,000 people. The top five species recorded in

Hampshire were the same as the UK as a whole (Large White, Small White, Gatekeeper, Meadow Brown and Peacock).

- Clive thanked everyone who submits **records**, including transect walkers, WCBS, the Garden Butterfly Survey or those who submit casual records. Clive particularly thanked those who had walked transects on our reserves once lockdown restrictions had eased as 100% were walked this year.
- **Andy Barker** had run a very successful online butterfly ID course, which raised a significant sum of money for Butterfly Conservation.
- Clive thanked **Mike Wall** for his work on HantsMoths and his role as County Moth Recorder.
- Unfortunately there had been reports this year of Purple Emperor collectors at Alice Holt. Our grossly inadequate wildlife protection laws had prevented action being taken against those responsible.
- Clive paid tribute to **Jayne Chapman** who has left a fantastic legacy on the three Hampshire reserves and through her work with local landowners. He reflected on her many successes for a variety of species on the reserves and thanked her for all her work over the previous nine years.

Committee Changes

Clive explained that all Main Committee members and several sub-committee members had decided to stand down at this year's AGM or not stand for re-election. This was in response to BC's announcement on 24 July 2020 of a new operating and funding model for all BC's reserves in England. The new approach had been developed without any prior discussion with Branch Chairs and seemed to overlook a fine legacy built up by this Branch over 30 years in the form of the three Hampshire reserves. Clive explained that other aggravating factors had played a part, notably the reasons for Jayne Chapman's decision to turn down a new role within BC, but the failure to find a way to consult with branches had been the primary reason that had caused Committee members to question their role and purpose. This was a very sad and disappointing situation but he stressed that much of the important work of the Branch would continue. This was something that Andy Barker would explain in more detail.

Clive thanked each member of the Main Committee and the various sub-committees for their help and support over the last seven years in his roles as Chair and Vice-Chair.

Update from Andy Barker

Andy thanked everyone who had agreed to take on a new role in the Branch and those who had continued in their existing roles. There was a lot of work ahead to rebuild relations with Head Office and volunteers and this would take time so he was grateful for their support. He highlighted a vacancy on Main Committee (Branch Secretary / Organiser) and encouraged members to come forward if they felt they could contribute to the work of the Branch.

Andy outlined his plans for the new Branch structure including subcommittees. He has decided to merge the Conservation and Records sub-committees. The membership of this new sub-committee will be Andy Barker, Catherine Hadler (National Trust), Clive Wood (from January 2021), Lee Hurrell and Rebekah Smith (South Downs National Park).

Andy also announced that he intends to form a Reserves Advisory Group in place of the Reserves sub-committee. This will comprise two local representatives for each of the Hampshire BC reserves. It is intended that the representatives for each reserve will meet on site twice a year with the staff member responsible for reserve management. They will act as the link between the Branch and BC Regional and Head Office staff. Membership of the group is Andy Barker and Lee Hurrell for MHD, Colin Stride and Richard Lemon for Yew Hill and John Oates (plus one vacancy) for Bentley Station Meadow.

Andy also explained that many other people continue with significant roles within the Branch. These included: Ashley Whitlock (Field Meetings Organiser), Bob Annell (Hampshire & IoW Butterfly Recorder), Mike Wall (Hampshire Moth Recorder); Jim Baldwin (IoW Moth Recorder); Andy & Linda Barker (Joint Transect Co-ordinators); Jacky Adams (WCBS Co-ordinator); Richard Lemon (Events Assistant); Stuart Read (IoW Group Lead) and Kay Shaw (IoW Field Meetings).

6. Election of Main Committee members

Clive Wood reported that:

- **Jacky Adams, Bob Annell, Arthur Greenwood, Penny Jeffreys, Mary Macmillan, Jenny Mallett, Simon Powell, Mike Wall, Elaina Whittaker-Slark and Clive Wood** were all standing down from Main Committee.
- No-one was standing for re-election.
- **Dr Andy Barker (Chair), Rupert Broadway, Freya Brown, Francis Plowman and Nick Radford** were seeking election to Main Committee.

It was agreed to vote on the above elections en-bloc.

Proposed: Andy Bolton. **Seconded:** Richard Lemon.

The motion to elect the above five members to form the new Main Committee was approved unanimously.

8. Health and Safety Matters

None.

9. Any Other Business

None.

10. Questions

A separate note of the questions raised at the AGM and the responses made by Main Committee members will be posted on the Branch website as an Addendum to these Minutes.

The meeting closed at 21:08.