

NORTH EAST WALES WILDLIFE

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

THURSDAY 21st OCTOBER 6pm AT RHYDYMWYN VALLEY NATURE RESERVE

Present

Jon Payne	Chairman
John Beard	Vice Chairman
Bob Lee	Treasurer
Russell Jones	Trustee
Stephen Brown	Trustee
Terrie Wootton	Operations Manager
Kylie Jones Mattock	Reserves Manager
Remani Jones	Johnstown Community Wildlife Officer
Ben Patterson	Volunteer Reserves Officer
Cat Lucas	Community Wildlife Education Officer
Mandy Cartwright	Reserves Officer
Karl Martin	Ranger
Gemma O'Malley	Administrative Officer / Membership Secretary

11 members

1. APOLOGIES – Lorna Beaumont, Chris Jones.

2. MINUTES OF THE 2009 A.G.M.

Accepted as a true record- proposed - Terrie Wootton

Seconded – Cat Lucas

3. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT –

Jon Payne - During past year NEWWildlife has carried out a wide range of activities in fulfilling aims and objectives involve managing wildlife sites providing excellent volunteering opportunities running events and providing information and training. All this has been accomplished by our team of enthusiastic and very well qualified staff supported by about 100 volunteers. We thank them for their fantastic work throughout the year.

NEWWildlife owns or manages around a dozen nature reserve sites either as mitigation sites for Great Crested Newt disturbed by development or in collaboration with partners. The management of these sites is funded by a combination of developers, site management payments, services charges, or in some cases funding

from the Countryside Council for Wales. The two major sites that we manage are Rhydymwyn Valley Nature Reserve funded by Defra and Lane End Great Crested Newt mitigation site in Buckley, owned and funded by Redrow. We have taken management responsibility under contract from Redrow for the Lane End site from April 2010.

Site management is carried out by our wildlife reserves team, supported by a band of volunteers. The work benefits both wildlife and volunteers and local people who may visit some of the reserves, it contributes to national and local biodiversity action plans and in particular the conservation of the protected species the Great Crested Newt.

NEWWildlife has undertaken a wide variety of education and awareness raising, training and community programmes. The wildlife community and education officer have attended meetings, run events, activities and training courses on species survey techniques and so on. Activity days for schools have been run supporting national curriculum including; pond dipping, mini beast hunts and wildlife walks.

Two specific projects have been Johnstown Community Wildlife Project which is funded by the Landfill Tax Credit scheme and has delivered a programme of community, environmental action, working with partners, volunteers and local schools and community. It has held wildlife events, created ponds in the school grounds and also the low impact building project, the roundhouse, built from locally sourced sustainable timber at Ysgol ID Hooson in Rhos near Wrexham. The other project, now concluded, was the Pondscapes project in partnership with CCW and Environment Agency Wales and that worked to improve the favourable conservation status of SSSI sites listed for the protection of Great Crested Newt. Green corridors were encouraged through creating or restoring 60 ponds.

Other projects have included the Big Dee Day clean up and the Invasive Species Action project which in partnership with many others and the help of numerous volunteers have tackled the ramp road of Himalayan Balsam along the River Alyn.

As far as membership is concerned, we have about 130 individual members, slightly down from last year. We have redesigned the members newsletter and website to include a members area which will shortly be available and Gemma O'Malley our membership secretary will say a little bit about that later.

I hope this brief summary of what NEWWildlife has accomplished over the past year gives an idea of the range of activities and events that benefit the environment, schools, community, members and volunteers who participate. They gain an understanding of nature conservation a collective sense of contribution towards it and a sense of personal fulfilment in undertaking worthwhile activities.

Coming now to look at our financial situation, our Treasurer will give you a more detailed account of the state of our finances from annual return, Company's House and the Charity Commission. It has to be said in this period of financial and economic downturn and public spending cuts and in common with other charities, we are facing some very testing times. From having a wide range of funding sources in the past albeit from public sources, we have become dependent on a fairly narrow range of funders as other sources of funding have ceased. The only really secure source of income is from the land management fund which has come from developers for the continuing management of sites that we own or are responsible for. Other sources especially from public bodies are surrounded by uncertainty due to the public sector spending review and the coming cuts, although we just have recently heard that Defra is to renew our contract for this site, renewing until 2016. For the first time though, expenditure is set to exceed income and we may be forced to draw on our reserves which is not sustainable. We are doing everything we can to address the situation, reducing our expenditure, seeking other sources of funding, taking funding bid writing advice, consulting with staff, taking other financial advice from accountants and recruiting new trustees.

Meanwhile we will continue to plan for future developments, particularly to develop a long term volunteering project, biodiversity project, and to seek to continue collaboration with other organisations.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the trustees for their continued support during the year, I also want to pay tribute to our professional staff and volunteers and for the enthusiastic effort that they put into all the activities and the work that they do and have done during the year. Thank you very much. In particular I want to pay tribute to Kylie, until now our Wildlife Reserves Manager, as some of you know Kylie is leaving us to take a new job with the Woodland Trust. Kylie you are a star, your knowledge, your skills, your professionalism, your enthusiasm has been an absolute inspiration to us all. You have been the face of NEWWildlife in many areas and it is due to in no small part your efforts that we have become recognised both locally and indeed nationally as an organisation of great skill and knowledge. You will be missed. We wish you all the best in your new job. I understand you are still going to come back and do some volunteering and we look forward to seeing you there.
Presentation of gifts.

5. FINANCIAL REPORT –

Audited accounts for the 9 months ended 31st March 2010 presented.

Treasurer advised of the new financial year running from April – March, hence the nine month accounts. Instead of July – June as previously run.

Bob Lee - The critical number is balance for year which you will see as minus

£40,504, this is the first time since 2001/2 that we have actually had a deficit, and that equates to about £1,000 per week which as a result we have had to draw on our reserves to cover this. The reasons are funding streams have started to dry up and as a result of this we have had to look to other areas for funding where we haven't necessarily been successful. At the end of March 2010 we had total funds of just over £413,000, as per last year report.

The estimated income for next financial year 2011 onwards is approx £100,000 and estimated expenditure is approx £250,000. We are looking to bridge that gap as we cannot draw on our reserves at that rate. A lot of these land management funds were given to us to manage sites in perpetuity which were deemed to be in 21 years. We have this potential crisis looming, we have to do something serious about it, all options are open from funding down to, if need be, we are going have to contract in size to continue on the basis that £100k will not support 6.6 staff which is what it is doing at the moment. There is enough money to take us into next year but then the money runs out unfortunately.

Treasurer also highlighted that £200,000 had been placed in a bond with 3.2% interest, this matured in September which doesn't show in these figures with interest of £6,500.

The Treasurer said it was disappointing to report this situation as it is not looking good and important decisions must be made very soon.

Member suggested collection.

Member asked Treasurer what fundraising is being done at the moment to which the treasurer explained we have various funding bids in which we are awaiting to hear from but there is no guarantee that they will be successful.

Treasurer advised that Empower have been brought on board to help meet the aspirations of the funders.

No further comments or questions.

To stay with Alliance & Leicester Bank as bankers – proposed - Jon Payne; seconded – Russell Jones

To stay with Gardeners of Holywell as accountants– proposed – Hazel Jones; seconded – Betty Lee

6. MEMBERSHIP REPORT –

Chairman paid tribute to Barbara Collings as membership secretary for many years.

Gemma O'Malley - We would like to thank all our members for their support. We hope the new look newsletter and wildlife matters has shown we are continuing to improve benefits for members and welcome any feedback at any time from members.

We are also in the process of having our website re-built for a more up to date look and provide a lot more information. As part of this we want to introduce a members log in on the website as an added benefit. This is still in the early stages however the overall idea is to have a log in for members to have the first refusal on any upcoming training courses, to voice their opinion, and record any interesting wildlife sightings etc. I have included on previous newsletters that any ideas or any functions that members want to see on their part of the website are welcome to be suggested to me.

To receive full benefits of your membership can I remind you to book an induction with Dave Williams who is the site manager so you can visit and explore the site during opening hours with up to seven people. I would also like to bring to your attention that Rhydymwyn is also now open from 9am – 5pm at weekends.

If any members have any queries, questions or issues please feel free to contact me at the office or discuss them with me after the meeting. Thank you.

Membership fee to be increased to £15.00 for individual and £20.00 for family proposed – Terrie Wootton; seconded – Kylie Jones Mattock

Stephen Brown apologised for his lateness when he arrived at this point in the meeting. He also suggested that a t-shirt with membership would be a benefit to the member but also promotes NEWWildlife whilst wearing it.

Member suggested that T-shirts bought in a large quantity could be a minimal fee.

Member suggested staff to carry membership leaflets whilst working on site, as he volunteers for another organisation this is what they do and it really gets their profile out there, this can be another way of increasing members.

7. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

No nominations for trustees.

Jon Payne resigned as Chairman and Trustee.

John Beard stood down and did not wish to be re-elected and announced he would be resigning.

Russell Jones stood down and did not wish to be re-elected.

Jon Payne summarised that NEWW required an injection of new ideas, fresh visions and particularly expertise in certain areas which none of current trustees actually have e.g. funding public relations, conservation and land management skills. The board needs to have key figures and acquire them as soon as possible.

Kylie Jones Mattock offered to advise NEWW on an ad-hoc basis.

Sarah Carver-Griffiths had to relinquish post as she had not attended meetings for over six months.

Trustees to remain on the board are Bob Lee and Stephen Brown with the view to recruit more as soon as possible.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

Cat Lucas thanked resigning Trustees for their work at NEWW.

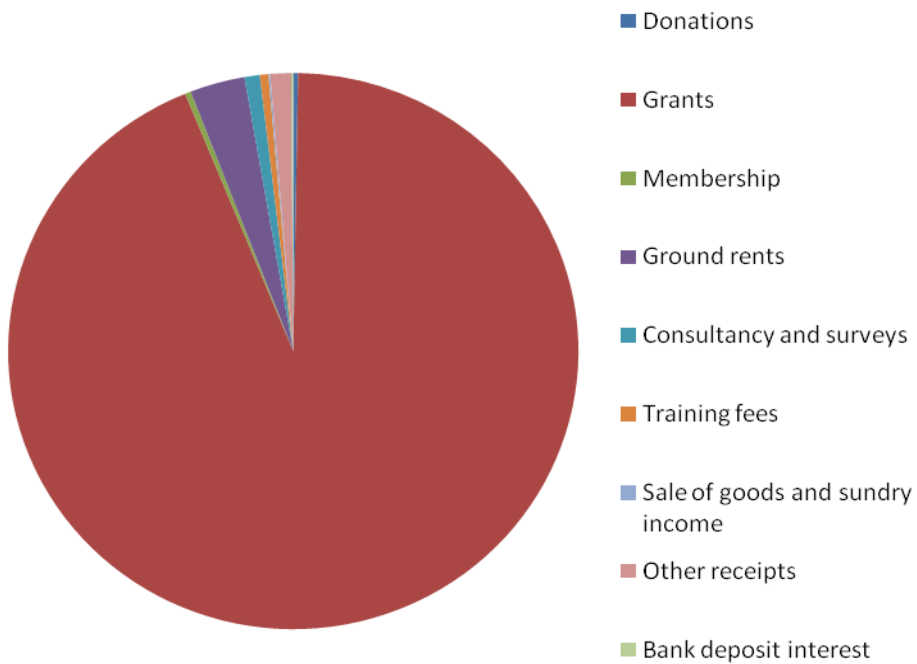
There being no other business the meeting closed and buffet and drinks were served.

NEW WILDLIFE Ltd: Audited accounts for the 9 months ended 30th June 2010

ACCOUNTING STATEMENT - Receipts and Payments Basis

<u>INCOME</u>	<u>2009-10</u>
Donations	390.00
Grants	135,313.00
Membership	478.00
Ground rents	4,514.00
Consultancy and surveys	1,256.00
Training fees	695.00
Sale of goods and sundry income	150.00
Other receipts	1,693.00
Bank deposit interest	173.00
Total Income	£144,662.00
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	<u>2009-10</u>
Salaries & Wages	83,281.00
Office costs & admin	14,436.00
Motor expenses	6,746.00
Publicity materials	3,825.00
Volunteer expenses & costs	1,442.00
Repairs & renewals	3,059.00
Education	1,616.00
Training	8,000.00
Events	3,327.00
3 Rivers	462.00
Species & habitat management	4,210.00
Conservation costs	38,944.00
Depreciation	11,352.00
Loss on disposal of fixed assets	98.00
Governance costs	4,368.00
Total Expenditure	£185,166.00
Balance for Year	-40,504.00
Cash funds this year end	187,101.00
Land Management funds	226,227.00
Total funds	£413,328.00

Income 09/10



Expenditure 09/10

