

BARNSELY BIODIVERSITY TRUST
NOTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Held at Barnsley Town Hall
on Monday 27th January 2014 at 7.00pm.



Apologies for absence.

Janet Mason, Ann Hanson, Robin Ridley, Kelly Brindley, Stephen Woodcock, John Rodwell, Pete Riley, Annice Fuller, Andrew McGuinness, Cllr. Miller, Andrew & Gill Wilson, Peter Clegg, Dennis Ashton, Dan Wildsmith.

Introduction.

Peter Roberts welcomed the twenty delegates present and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

Barnsley Biological Records Centre - Mike Guy and Brian Armstrong

Mike Guy who had taken over from Derek Whitely reported on the progress of their work, tabling the report which provided more details. He stressed the importance of sending in records.

Although they prefer records to be sent in electronically, they will accept paper records. All records should include five basic points: species name, location, 6 figure grid reference, date, and name of recorder.

2,000 records were obtained from the 2013 Bioblitz, based at Old Moor RSPB.

Brian Armstrong pointed out that recorders can ask for maps indicating the presence of particular species.

Barnsley Council Biodiversity Officer – Trevor Mayne

Trevor Mayne reported on the progress of his work and the council's biodiversity programme and made copies of his report available. *Trevor reported on the progress made in the Dearne Valley Green Heart 'Nature Improvement area by Barnsley council in creating woodlands and managing amenity grasslands. He informed the group of the stage 2 application for HLF Landscape Partnership funding for the Dearne Valley covering a similar area to the NIA. Park sites on the list for provisional funding are Cliffe Wood LWS, Dearne Valley Park LNR, West Haigh Wood LWS/LNR and Parkhill Nature Reserve LWS brick kilns (bat roost)

Barnsley is in area of the South Yorkshire Local Nature Partnership (LNP) – and the West Yorkshire LNP and Peak District LNP. Their aim is to keep a strategic regional overview of major natural environment issues. One of their key concerns is the proposed route of the HS2. Barnsley council was to make a response to the consultation on HS2.

Trevor has had more time to give to planning issues as he has been able to reduce his work load on the NIA. A lot of large, new housing applications are being received in anticipation of sites being adopted under the local plan. Ecological assessments have been carried out for the provisional development site allocations which he has overseen. A further round of public consultation on the local development plan was due in June 2014.

The Local Sites Partnership. The annual biodiversity indicator report to DEFRA showed 18% of sites in positive conservation management which is the same as last year. The figure is expected to go down this coming year because 19 new Local Geological Sites have been adopted which do not have any positive management. LWS 1 Western Moors is being surveyed now ahead of the expected removal of the SSSI area and Romticle Viaduct (bats) and Rabbit Ings are being proposed as candidate LWSs.

Under the cuts being made by Barnsley council the Countryside Ranger Team (public paths and nature reserves maintenance) are reducing from a team of five to three which will affect wildlife sites.

Report on BBT Biodiversity in Schools Project – Colin Graham

Colin Graham gave a report on the progress of the Biodiversity in Schools project which had received funding following a successful bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). The start of the project involved the recruitment of volunteers and a volunteers training day in October 2013.

All is going very well, with eight new schools whilst an original eight pilot schools continued to be supported. Colin praised the helpers of whom there are now 10 regular ones. The ultimate aim is for volunteers to oversee a school or small group of schools by themselves.

The excellent existing biodiversity within school grounds should be celebrated and the most made of what they have to offer.

Colin thanked Stephen Woodcock for providing maps for the school grounds and Linda Graham for designing an interim risk assessment statement.

Report from BBT Trustees – Peter Roberts

Peter Roberts, chair of the trustees, presented the Trustees' Report which gave an overview of progress made during the year. He highlighted the start of the work revising the local biodiversity action plan; local biodiversity issues and opportunities; the activities of the Dearne Valley Nature Improvement Area programme; and the successful bid for HLF funding for a Biodiversity in Schools project. He paid tribute to the work of the different partners in the Biodiversity Trust and stressed that there was much to do.

Financial Report – David Allen

David Allen gave a statement on the financial position and made a financial statement available.

The bank balance at the end of the previous financial year (October 2012) was £5,300.97 with two accounts for £2,756.74 and for £110.78 rendered but unpaid, a net balance of £2,433.45.

In the financial year 2012-13 (December 2013) the Trust received two donations of £30 (£60 in total) from the Groundwork Trust, one of £40 from K C Parking and one of £250 from the Barnsley Bird Study Group. Interest received during the year amounted to £13.61, giving a total income of £363.61.

In addition the Trust received the first instalment of its grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, half of the total due over three years, that is £14,950.

Expenditure during the year included the two accounts for £2756.74 and for £110.78 rendered but unpaid in 2011-12. Expenditure also comprised: £96 for DVDs; £405 for the workshop held in February 2013, £150 for Companies House fees and £163.80 expenses incurred for the volunteers training day for the HLF Biodiversity in Schools project in October 2013. The total expenditure directly attributable to the financial year was £814.80. However all the costs to be incurred on the schools project have not been accounted for. This leaves a bank balance of £16,932.82.

Election of trustees

Under the terms of the Trust, one third of the Trustees has to retire annually by rotation but may be re-elected. Jill Hayler and Monica Ward whose turn it was to stand down were re-elected as trustees. There were no other nominations.

Discussion on response to proposed HS2 route

Following the public consultation meeting in November on the HS2 route in Barnsley, responses were due at the end of January 2014. Barnsley council has compiled a response which Trevor has contributed to in liaison with Peter Roberts and Mick Birkinshaw of BBT and Sheffield Area Geology Trust. Direct impacts include Carlton Marsh LNR/WLS, Wombwell Woods LWS/ASNW, Rabbit Ings CP, Black Lane LWS and Sunny Bank Wood LWS. Those present discussed the issues and the response to be submitted to the consultation would be made available on the BBT website.