

**Minutes of the forty-fifth meeting of the Board of Trustees of  
the Open Spaces Society held at 6pm on Wednesday 13 May 2020  
by videoconference**

<b>PRESENT</b>	Chris Beney (chairman) Graham Bathe Stuart Bain Simon Hunt Chris Meewezen Phil Wadey Steve Warr
<b>IN ATTENDANCE</b>	Kate Ashbrook (general secretary)
<b>APOLOGIES</b>	John Hall

**MINUTES OF MEETING ON 15 APRIL 2020**

51/20 The minutes of the meeting were approved and for publication on the website.

**ORAL REPORT ON STAFF**

52/20 The general secretary gave an oral report on how staff were coping with working (largely) from home. She said that everyone was working hard with plenty to do, and communicating regularly. We were providing equipment to all who need it.

**UPDATE ON COURT CASES**

**Blackbushe, Yateley Common, Hampshire**

53/20 The general secretary reported that Hampshire County Council, with our support, had won the case against Blackbushe Airport Ltd (BAL) in the high court but BAL had obtained leave to appeal to the court of appeal. We would be considering whether we needed to intervene again.

**Rollright footpath 7, Oxfordshire**

54/20 The general secretary reported that we had lost our case in the high court against the diversion of Rollright footpath 7 in Oxfordshire, but that she would shortly be recommending to the trustees that we seek permission to appeal to the court of appeal.

## **PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY, POLICY ON DEFINITIVE MAP MODIFICATION ORDERS (DMMOS)**

- 55/20 The board considered a paper from Phil Wadey in which he asked for an exemption to the policy agreed at the previous meeting (minutes 48-49/20), to desist from submitting applications for DMMOs orders during the virus. Although he was submitting an application as an individual, he considered that as a trustee he should follow our policy. In this case, the owner of a large estate was proposing the diversion of a footpath which would affect other unrecorded paths which were being ignored; the owner refused to delay his application and the diversion was more likely to be confirmed if applications for the unrecorded paths had not been made.
- 56/10 The board unanimously agreed (a) to an exemption to the policy in this case, and (b) to empower the general secretary to grant exemptions to the policy on a case-by-case basis where the landowner in a case is instigating changes.

## **FINANCIAL UPDATE**

- 57/20 The trustees noted the financial reports to the end of March 2020 and the treasurer's commentary. They were pleased that we are in a strong financial position, despite the uncertainties of the stock market.

## **MEMBERSHIP FIGURES TO END MARCH 2020**

- 58/20 The trustees noted with pleasure that membership figures appeared to be unaffected by the covid-19 virus.

## **DIGITAL REPORT TO END APRIL 2020**

- 59/20 The trustees noted the report with interest. It was suggested that we might do more to emphasise the value of local open spaces during lockdown. The success of the publicity of the Magic website was also noted with pleasure and it was thought that we could look for other ways to encourage people to do something.

## **FUTURE MEETINGS**

- 60/20 It was agreed to hold the next meeting on Thursday 11 June at 6pm, with a finance committee meeting the previous week.
- 61/20 The trustees expressed their thanks to the staff for their excellent work in difficult circumstances.

The meeting ended at 6.50 pm.



22 May 2020