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**Minutes of the sixty-fifth meeting of the Board of Trustees of
the Open Spaces Society held at 18:00 on Thursday 4 November 2021
by videoconference**

PRESENT Phil Wadey (chairman)
Stuart Bain
Graham Bathe (vice-chairman)
Chris Beney
John Hall
Tara-Jane Sutcliffe
Steve Warr (treasurer)

APOLOGIES Simon Hunt

IN ATTENDANCE Kate Ashbrook (general secretary)

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

181/21 There were no declarations of interest.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

182/21 The general secretary reported that our office assistant, Christine Hunter, was leaving on 20 December after 8½ years with us. We would take the opportunity to review the role.

MINUTES OF MEETING ON 8 SEPTEMBER 2021

183/21 The minutes of the meeting on 8 September were approved, and it was agreed to publish them on the website.

DRAFT MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING ON 20 SEPTEMBER 2021

184/21 The draft minutes were noted and it was agreed to publish them as a draft on the website.

NATIONAL TRUST COUNCIL

- 185/21 It was noted that the general purposes committee had interviewed two candidates for the role of our appointee on the National Trust council and had appointed Tara-Jane Sutcliffe. The trustees congratulated Tara-Jane, and thanked Graham for his service.

REPORT ON PLANS FOR STRATEGIC PLAN AWAY-DAY ON 9 NOVEMBER

- 186/21 The chairman gave an update on the plans for the event the following week.

ETHNIC DIVERSITY IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL SECTOR

- 187/21 Stuart Bain spoke to his paper which arose from a webinar held by Wildlife and Countryside Link which he had attended. This following a research project commissioned by Link which would be published next spring.
- 188/21 A number of questions were posed for consideration. After discussing briefly the need for ethnic diversity to be taken into account by a campaigning organisation with no direct beneficiaries, it was agreed that the first question should be reworded to 'Is ethnic diversity important to the OSS?' so that the answer could be recorded with its explanation, including the 'how' and 'why', to guide future work.
- 189/21 It was agreed to have this in our minds on the strategic plan day on 9 November and that the chairman and Stuart would then discuss next steps.

TRUSTEE SUCCESSION AND SKILLS AUDIT

- 190/21 The chairman introduced his paper in which he proposed a working party to look at skills gaps and to consider (a) whether these were best addressed by developing existing trustees, developing existing staff, recruiting staff, or searching for new trustees with the required skills, and (b) the best sources of training (if a development option results) or the best sources to seek new staff or trustees (as appropriate) if the recruit option is selected. The working party would also consider diversity in all senses of the word, including skills, backgrounds and viewpoints.
- 191/21 Various views were expressed, including the suggestion that we look at existing research to learn the benefits of a diverse board. Diversity of thought was considered important.
- 192/21 It was agreed that the working party would consist of Phil Wadey, Stuart Bain, Graham Bathe, and the general secretary or her nominee.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

Management report and reserves to September 2021 and treasurer's commentary

- 193/21 The treasurer spoke to his commentary. The finances were healthy, we had plenty of cash; some fixed-term deposits were renewed for one year; the Charifund

investments had recovered since December 2020, and our reserves were good. We had received some generous legacies, and membership continued to rise.

Topic for November appeal

- 194/21 The general secretary said there was no obvious topic for a November appeal. It was unanimously agreed not to have a second appeal this year.

REVIEW OF MEETING

- 195/21 The trustees were content with the meeting.

MEETING DATES FOR 2022

- 196/21 The following were agreed (all Thursdays at 6pm)


20 January
 17 February
 17 March*
 14 April
 12 May
 9 June*
 7 July (AGM)
 11 August
 8 September*
 6 October
 3 November
 8 December*
 (* = quarterly meetings)

- 197/21 It was agreed that the meetings would all be virtual, except for the AGM which would be booked at Friends' House. If the need arose for a face-to-face trustees' meeting this could be arranged.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 9 December* at 6pm
 Strategic plan away day: Tuesday 9 November.

The meeting ended at 19.07.



Phil Wadey
 Chair of Trustees