

**Minutes of the seventy-third meeting of the Board of Trustees of
the Open Spaces Society held at 18.00 on Thursday 15 September 2022
by videoconference**

PRESENT Phil Wadey (chairman)
Graham Bathe (vice-chairman)
Stuart Bain
Chris Beney
John Hall
Simon Hunt

APOLOGIES Tara-Jane Sutcliffe

IN ATTENDANCE Kate Ashbrook (general secretary)

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

117/22 There were no interests to declare.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

118/22 The trustees noted with pleasure the generous legacy of £782,437 from Ronald Smith, our former vice-president and treasurer.

MINUTES OF MEETING ON 11 JUNE 2022

119/22 Subject to the correction of the date, the minutes of the meeting on 11 August were approved, and it was agreed to publish them on the website. The confidential minutes were also approved, for distribution to staff but not for publication.

**MANAGEMENT REPORT, RESERVES SPREADSHEET, MEMBERSHIP, AND
TREASURER'S COMMENTARY, TO 30 JUNE 2022**

120/22 The treasurer reported that the deficit budget had dropped by about £40,000, which was a good result given that we had not yet had an appeal. The legacies and donations were relatively small to the end of June, but we had since received the legacy of £782,437 from Ronald Smith. The reserves table was split into four sections: winding-down costs, operating costs, designated or restricted funds, and excess. At the end of June, the excess was £113,128 but was now increased by the legacy. The trustees were invited to bring any ideas for additional expenditure, in line with the strategic plan, to the October meeting.

121/22 On membership the treasurer noted that the figures were fairly static.

- 122/22 The trustees thanked the treasurer for his excellent report. In response to Graham Bathe, the treasurer agreed in future to have a note at the top of his commentary to give an overview of how we were doing.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

- 123/22 The treasurer gave an oral report of the meeting which had been held immediately before the trustees' meeting.
- 124/22 He reported on his meeting with the financial administrator and office manager in Henley on 9 August. There were various measures we could take to streamline our processes, and we were reviewing whether monthly memberships were cost-effective. Any change would be brought to the trustees for approval.

INCREMENTAL LEGAL COSTS

- 125/22 The chairman gave an oral report on the incremental legal costs on cases taken by the society, the various stages of action and the points at which the legal committee and trustees had to take decisions. The trustees welcomed this clarification and agreed the following:
- (a) the chairman would put this into a paper, with an example of how it would work in practice;
 - (b) we would develop a standard way of showing where we are in the process each time a decision is required;
 - (c) we would produce an annual report to the trustees which was a three-year rolling report of legal cases, the costs so far, what we had hoped to achieve and what we had achieved, and the benefits of the action, and any other relevant matters. The annual date for the report would be agreed later.

LOCAL CORRESPONDENTS

Renewals

- 126/22 The trustees approved the following renewals for a further three years: Jo Bird (former Teesdale District and Wear Valley District, County Durham), Paul Brown (Mid Sussex District, West Sussex), Jeremy Clyne (London Boroughs of Lambeth and Wandsworth), Gerald Davies (West Northamptonshire and part of Ceredigion), and Paul Partington (former Taunton Deane District, Somerset).

Appointment

- 127/22 The trustees approved the appointment of Chas Townley for Stroud District, Gloucestershire, for one year in the first instance.

Reports from local correspondents

- 128/22 The trustees noted the report from Chris Beney and John Hall and thanked them for producing it, and the local correspondents for all their work. In particular they were delighted to note Lucy Wilson's action against a path-blocker in Cornwall and the subsequent clearance of the path.

PROFESSIONAL INDEMNITY INSURANCE

- 129/22 The trustees were not aware of any new claims or circumstances or problems which may give rise to a claim.

MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

- 130/22 190-192/21, trustee succession and skills audit: it was agreed that Graham Bathe would lead this.
- 131/22 112/22, tracking our carbon footprint: it was agreed that Stuart Bain would look for good practice in other organisations.

REVIEW OF MEETING

- 132/22 The trustees were content with the meeting.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 133/22 The next meeting would be on Thursday 6 October 2022 at 6pm.

DATES FOR MEETINGS IN 2023

- 134/22 The following were agreed (all Thursdays at 6pm).
19 January, 16 February, 16 March*, 13 April, 18 May, 8 June*, 6 July (AGM),
10 August, 7 September*, 5 October, 2 November, 7 December* (* = quarterly meetings).

The meeting ended at 19.02.



Phil Wadey
Chair of Trustees