

**Minutes of the seventy-eighth meeting of the Board of Trustees of
the Open Spaces Society held at 18.00 on Thursday 16 March 2023
by videoconference**

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

APOLOGIES Tara-Jane Sutcliffe

IN ATTENDANCE Kate Ashbrook (general secretary)

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

26/23 There were no interests to declare.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

27/23 It was noted with sadness that Maurice Philpot had died. He was a long-standing member, a trustee from 1982 to 1985, and had granted the society a right of estovers on St Clements Common in Norfolk.

MINUTES OF MEETINGS

28/23 The minutes of the meeting on 16 February 2023 were approved, and it was agreed to publish them on the website.

29/23 The minutes of the meeting on 26 February regarding camping on Dartmoor were approved.

30/23 The minutes of the legal committee on 21 February were noted.

INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS FROM 2023

31/23 The trustees had committed to re-tendering for our independent examiners in 2023. They noted the report from the finance committee of the tendering process, and that the recommendation, after receiving four applications and meeting two firms, was to propose at the AGM that we appoint Villars Hayward of Henley-on-Thames as our independent examiners from 2023.

32/23 The trustees unanimously approved the recommendation, and thanked the finance committee for its work on this.

OFFICE LEASE

- 33/23 The trustees noted a paper from the general secretary that the office-lease break-period ends on 11 November 2023. However, we do not wish to break the lease because, now that many staff work from home much of the time, the office is a suitable size for our requirements. It was further noted that the landlord can review the rent from 11 November 2024.

EVERSLEY AWARD

- 34/23 This was discussed under confidential business.

TRUSTEE SUCCESSION

- 35/23 The trustees agreed that the chairman would pursue with a number of people the possibility of standing as a trustee, in order to obtain some particular benefits. Graham Bathe and Tara-Jane Sutcliffe would develop a skills audit.

AGM ARRANGEMENTS

- 36/23 The AGM arrangements were agreed, on the same basis as 2022.

Vice-presidents

- 37/23 It was agreed to propose Diane Andrewes as a new vice-president, alongside the existing vice-presidents David (Lord) Clark, Mike Clarke, Roger de Freitas, and Richard Mabey. Diane had served as a trustee from 1993 to 1995, and 2007 to 2018, and had been a solid campaigner for paths and access in Bursledon, Hampshire, and beyond for many years.

Afternoon entertainment

- 38/23 For the afternoon entertainment it was agreed to invite members to speak about their campaigns.

LOCAL CORRESPONDENTS

Renewals

- 39/23 It was unanimously agreed to renew the following for three years: Chris Hall (Oxfordshire), Stephen Lindsay (Rhondda Cynon Taf), Denise Metcalfe (former Alnwick District, Northumberland), Bob Milton (Surrey Heath District and Waverley Borough, Surrey).

Reports from local correspondents

- 40/23 The local correspondents' reports had been circulated to the trustees, with comments from the staff, and Chris Beney and John Hall had submitted observations to the trustees. It was noted that staff were following up various issues. The trustees thanked Chris and John for their work.
- 41/23 Chris said that he wished to stand down from the role of collating comments on the reports and it was agreed to discuss at the next meeting who might take this on.

PROFESSIONAL INDEMNITY INSURANCE

- 42/23 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

- 43/23 The report was noted.

REVIEW OF MEETING

44/23 The trustees were content with the meeting.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

45/23 The next meeting would be on Thursday 13 April 2023 at 18.00. It was noted that the chairman would be away on 18 May so, if it was necessary to hold a meeting in May, this would be on 11 May (subject to availability).

46/23 It was agreed to discuss at the next meeting whether trustees would like a face-to-face meeting in 2023, what would be its purpose, and when and where it would be held.

The meeting ended at 18.59.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "P Wadey". The signature is written over a horizontal dotted line.

Phil Wadey
Chair of Trustees