

**Minutes of the eighty-first meeting of the Board of Trustees of
the Open Spaces Society held at 18.00 on Thursday 10 August 2023
by videoconference**

PRESENT Phil Wadey (chairman)
Graham Bathe (vice-chairman)
Simon Hunt
Tara-Jane Sutcliffe

IN ATTENDANCE Kate Ashbrook (general secretary)

APOLOGIES Stuart Bain (treasurer), John Hall

ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN

104/23 It was agreed unanimously that Phil Wadey and Graham Bathe should be re-elected as chairman and vice-chairman respectively for a further three years. Graham indicated that he would wish to stand down mid-term to stagger the departure of the two officers.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

105/23 There were no interests to declare.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

106/23 Case officer (enforcement): It was noted with pleasure that we had appointed Jes Tyler to the new role of case officer (enforcement), and that she started on 1 August.

107/23 Dartmoor backpack-camping case: It was noted with pleasure that the Dartmoor National Park Authority and the society had won the case in the court of appeal, with the three judges ruling unanimously in our favour. There had been significant publicity for the society.

108/23 Transfer to sharepoint: It was noted that the society was transferring its IT from the server to sharepoint on Tuesday 15 August, which might mean some interruption to normal activity.

MINUTES OF MEETING ON 8 JUNE 2023

109/23 The minutes of the meeting on 8 June 2023 were approved, and it was agreed to publish them on the website.

110/23 Graham Bathe noted that the minutes omitted to mention, as a matter arising, the work on our carbon footprint. The general secretary assured him that this had not been forgotten.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

(a) Draft minutes of finance committee on 20 July 2023

111/23 The draft minutes were noted.

(b) Management accounts, reserves, and treasurer's commentary for quarter 2.

112/23 These were noted.

(c) Investment strategy

113/23 The trustees discussed the paper from the treasurer in his absence. It was agreed to seek professional advice to understand whether our deposit and investment policy is suitable for our needs; and to review our investment portfolio to ensure it meets our risk appetite between risk and return, but that these exercises should be light touch. In the meantime, the trustees adopted the investment strategy as an interim measure.

(d) Designating funds

114/23 The trustees discussed and approved the treasurer's paper. They agreed to propose projects for which we might wish to designate funds, and the staff were also invited to do so. This would enable us to bring on projects if we had the money to do so. The general secretary suggested we might look at how we designate funds for legal work. The chairman asked that trustees respond even if they had no proposals.

(e) Financial policies and procedures

115/23 The trustees noted paragraph 4.2 in particular. This set out a new schedule of delegated authority for expenditure. It was agreed to clarify paragraph 4.2.3 relating to the general secretary's authority for a single item of unbudgeted expenditure (excluding any legal matters) up to £2,000, to make it clear that the sum is reset after it has been reported at a board meeting.

COMMITTEES, SUBCOMMITTEES AND WORKING PARTIES

116/23 The trustees approved the terms of reference and membership of the committees, subcommittees and working parties. The agreed membership was as follows:

General purposes committee: Phil Wadey, Graham Bathe, Stuart Bain

Finance committee: Stuart Bain (chairman), Simon Hunt, Phil Wadey

Legal committee: Phil Wadey (chairman), John Hall, Tara-Jane Sutcliffe

Eversley Award: John Hall, Kate Ashbrook

117/23 They agreed to disband the Covid-19 working party.

AGM 2023

(a) Draft minutes

118/23 The trustees approved the minutes for publication on the website as draft.

(b) Matters arising from the minutes

119/23 Minute 23/9: It was noted that the office was still pursuing the issue of the locked gates at Primrose Hill.

(c) Feedback from the meeting

120/23 The feedback from trustees was positive. The chairman said that he would like more trustees to attend the AGM in person and asked that they make a greater effort to do so next year.

BOARD RECRUITMENT AND SUCCESSION PLANNING

121/23 The trustees considered the paper from Graham Bathe and Tara-Jane Sutcliffe. It was agreed that we should aim to co-opt two members, which would require identifying the skills we particularly sought, consideration of how to tackle diversity, advertising, and interviews. The matter was referred to the general purposes committee and the general secretary in the first instance. The trustees thanked Graham and Tara-Jane for the paper.

LOCAL CORRESPONDENTS' EVENT, 1-2 AUGUST 2023

122/23 The trustees who had attended gave positive feedback. The chairman thanked the staff for the considerable preparation and administration. Trustees hoped that the event could be repeated next year.

DATES OF MEETINGS IN 2024

123/23 The following dates were agreed (all Thursdays at 18.00 hours):
18 Jan, 15 Feb, 14 Mar*, 11 Apr, 16 May, 6 Jun*, 4 Jul (AGM), 8 Aug, 5 Sep, 3 Oct,
7 Nov, 5 Dec*.

REVIEW OF MEETING

124/23 The trustees were content with the meeting.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

125/23 Thursday 7 September 2023 at 6pm.
The meeting ended at 19.10.



Phil Wadey
Chair of Trustees