

**Minutes of the eighty-seventh meeting of the Board of Trustees of
the Open Spaces Society held at 18.30 on Thursday 14 March 2024
by videoconference**

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

OBSERVER James Lean

IN ATTENDANCE Kate Ashbrook (general secretary)

48/24 The chairman welcomed James Lean, one of two candidates whom the general purposes committee was recommending for co-option to the board.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

49/24 There were no interests to declare.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Patrick (Lord) Cormack

50/24 The trustees were sad to note the death of Patrick Cormack, former MP for Cannock in Staffordshire, who was a member of our executive committee from 1974 to 1980.

Outcome of Shobley Bottom common, New Forest, legal case

51/24 The trustees were pleased to learn that the defendant in this case had agreed to remove the unlawful fencing from this common. The society had contributed financially to this case. It was agreed that the staff would work with Graham Bathe to initiate the coordination of bodies concerned about New Forest commons, to provide a robust opposition to unlawful works.

MINUTES OF MEETING ON 19 FEBRUARY 2024

52/24 The minutes of the meeting on 19 February 2024 were approved and it was agreed to publish them on the website.

MINUTES OF MEETING BY EMAIL ON 4 MARCH 2024

53/24 The minutes of the meeting on 4 March 2024, regarding legal case 24-02, were approved.

MINUTES OF LEGAL COMMITTEE MEETING ON 25 FEBRUARY 2024

- 54/24 The minutes of the legal committee on 25 February (regarding legal case 24-02) were noted.

DELEGATED EXPENDITURE

- 55/24 It was noted that the general secretary was to approve up to £2,000 for improving access to the society's land, Parliament Piece, in Kenilworth, Warwickshire. This would include the replacement of stiles with kissing-gates. The Kenilworth Footpath Preservation Group had kindly offered to do the work at no cost to the society.
- 56/24 The general secretary was asked to provide a note for trustees of our interest in various pieces of land, with plans.

INVESTMENT-OPTIONS ADVICE

- 57/24 The treasurer presented his paper in which he invited the trustees to approve his recommendations regarding investment advice.
- 58/24 The trustees agreed to engage formally with the firm selected to share financial policies and details, and to arrange for a meeting to introduce the selected firm to all trustees and discuss details of the process.

EVERSLEY AWARD

- 59/24 It was noted that the Eversley working party was not making a recommendation for an award this year.

AGM ARRANGEMENTS, THURSDAY 4 JULY 2024

- 60/23 The AGM arrangements were agreed on the same basis as 2023.

Vice-presidents

- 61/23 It was agreed to propose Diane Andrewes, David (Lord) Clark, Mike Clarke, Roger de Freitas, and Richard Mabey as vice-presidents. Tara-Jane Sutcliffe would propose, and John Hall would second them.

Afternoon entertainment

- 62/23 For the afternoon entertainment it was agreed to invite members to speak about their campaigns. The trustees were encouraged to suggest names of suitable speakers.

LOCAL CORRESPONDENTS

Renewals

- 63/23 It was agreed to reappoint Mike Clarke as our local correspondent for Bedford Borough for a further three years.

Reports from local correspondents

- 64/23 The trustees noted the reports and the comments from staff. It was agreed that the cover sheet showing who had reported should be rolled forward so that it always showed the last four quarters. It was also agreed to review the new process after we have run it for longer.

PROFESSIONAL INDEMNITY INSURANCE

- 65/23 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

- 66/23 The report was noted. The following points were raised.
- 67/23 Minutes 30/22 and 99/23, lack of diversity: Stuart Bain and Graham Bathe will review this in the light of our new policy.
- 68/23 Minute 182/22, climate crisis: James Lean offered to ask the charities team at his bank for a steer on this. Stuart Bain, Graham Bathe, and the general secretary would meet to discuss.

REVIEW OF MEETING

- 69/24 The trustees were content with the meeting.

DECISION ABOUT CO-OPTION

- 70/24 In response to the chairman, James Lean said he would be pleased to be co-opted to the board. He left the meeting.
- 71/24 The board agreed unanimously to co-opt James Lean until the AGM.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 72/24 Thursday 11 April 2024 at 18.00.
The meeting ended at 19.16.

Meeting dates for 2024 (all Thursdays at 18.00)

16 May (to be reviewed)

6 June*

4 July (AGM)

8 August

5 September*

3 October

7 November

5 December* (at 18.30).

* = quarterly meetings



Phil Wadey
Chair of Trustees