

North Staffordshire National Trust Association

Minutes of the 41th AGM at the N Staffs Conference Centre, 19th October 2021 at 7.00pm

Richard Adams welcomed members to the AGM and recorded 3 apologies from members.

Chairman's opening remarks: Richard reminded members that our Chairman, David Morgan, stood down last month as he is moving house to out of this area. He thanked David for all his work in stewarding the Association through the Covid lock-downs. We mourn and remember all those friends and family who we have lost recently, whether through Covid or from other causes. However, many of us will also have new grandchildren or other additions to our families, and it is perhaps for these people that we are pleased to see the Association running again. It is part of our mission, to preserve our heritage and countryside, and to ensure it will be there for future generations to enjoy as we are now.

The Minutes of the 40th AGM: Richard noted that the 40th AGM in 2020 was held as an on-line video conference due to Covid restrictions at the time. No questions were asked. Richard asked that the record of the meeting should be accepted, and all present agreed.

Secretary's report: The Association is reviving itself. The walks programme started again in the summer, car outings begin this week, our Christmas meal is well-booked already, and coach trips and the holiday to Scotland are coming next year. Credit is due to Marilyn Lycett and her team of organisers, who have spent the last 18 months arranging, and then often cancelling and re-arranging, events to fit in with the restrictions in place. We thanked Sue Corlett, who is stepping down this year, for all her work for us, both on and off the committee.

Membership is currently 316, about 15% down on the 2019 figure, but this is encouraging considering all that we have been through.

Treasurer's report: Huw Davies presented the accounts for 2020-21, copies of which had been distributed.

Huw noted that we have unsurprisingly had a quiet year financially, with low income balanced by low expenditure. Our reserves are £11,000, in line with last year. Huw thanked James Scott of Hardings Accountants for examining the accounts for us. There were no questions, and the meeting accepted the accounts.

Subscription level for next year: Richard noted that payment of subscriptions was suspended last year during the lock-downs. The meeting agreed to restart subscriptions in January 2021, at the same rate as before, that is £12 per year for individual members, and £8 for further members at the same address.

Approvals for re-election to committee: In accordance with our constitution, committee members who have served for 5 years or more must seek approval to stand for re-election; there were seven who wished to stand again – Richard Adams, Roger Cartlidge, Cynthia Dumbelton, Sue Till, Rose Wheat, Ralph White and Bob Winter. The meeting agreed that these could stand.

Nominations for officers and committee. Ralph White had been nominated for the office of chairman. In addition to the above list of seven, Huw Davies, Marion Lycett, Jane Mayer and John Spriggs wished to stand again for re-election. Further nominations from the room were sought, but none were made.

Ralph White was elected as chairman by an overwhelming show of hands. All the other officers and committee were also approved by an overwhelming show of hands.

AOB: None

Chairman's closing remarks: Ralph thanked everyone for their confidence in returning him to office, and thanked the committee and our archivist, Kay Williams, for their continuing excellent work. He outlined three of the challenges we face: reorganisation of our support staff at the National Trust and the ongoing difficulty of contacting the right individual, many of whom are still working from home; obtaining funds to maximise our donations from schemes such as the Landfill Grant; and gaining wider recognition and publicity for associations such as ours, locally and nationally. Ralph also advised that committee are considering proposing a change to the requirement for our members to be and remain members of the national NT.

The meeting closed at 7.24pm.