



MINUTES OF THE CPRE SUSSEX ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2023

Held on Saturday, 15th July 2023 at 10.30am at the The Drill Hall, Horsham, West Sussex

1. Welcome

Our President, The Lord Egremont, welcomed all to the meeting and along with other 'housekeeping' details asked for all mobile phones to be turned off.

2. Apologies for Absence

Jeannette Towey, Jonathan Ranger, Robert Park, Anne Duke, Felicity Hills, Pamela Hunter, Alec Roy Coppard, Ann Bullen, Susannah Hill, John Marriott, Julia Tingle, Martin Heath, Jonathan Ranger, Hilary Green, Pamela Bruce, Emily Obrien, Stephen and Angela Holroyd, Jill Sutcliffe, John Kay, Anne Duke, Bob Park.

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting 2022

A member had asked at the 2022 AGM if the Swire Trust Donation was 'ring fenced.' Lesley Wilson had agreed to find out and she confirmed at the meeting that it was an unrestricted donation and therefore not ringfenced.

Resolution to approve and sign the Minutes of the last AGM:

Proposed: Michael Warden Seconded: Lesley Wilson

The meeting, 32 members, voted unanimously in favour of approving the Minutes.

In addition - postal/electronic votes received: For 20 Against 0 Abstain 2

The minutes were signed by Lord Egremont.

4. Chairman's Report – Prof Dan Osborn:

After 42 years Lord Egremont is standing down as CPRE Sussex's President. Dan thanked Lord Egremont on behalf of the Branch for the many years of loyal service and support given to CPRE Sussex.

Dan also welcomed Derek Crush from Daylands Farm, Ashurst. Derek is our CPRE Hedgerow Champion and kindly hosted and starred in our Hedgerow photoshoot. The CPRE National Office are keen to promote hedgerows as wonderful wildlife habitats. Derek organises farm visits and Dan recommended checking the Daylands Farm website for details.

Our new Director, Paul Steedman, was introduced along with our new Trustees - Libby Alexander; Monty Larkin; Deborah Speirs; Corinne Stuart; Jill Sutcliffe; Katherine Sykes and Carol Rue (who missed the cut off for formal appointment at this AGM.)

Grateful thanks were passed to Julian Hill as he stands down after 8 years as Branch Treasurer. Vic lent was also thanked for all his hard work on behalf of the Branch, particularly his work with the SDNPA.

Thanks were passed to Marilyn Rawsom-Ekblom, Jessica Sternberg and Katie Townsend for their incredible expertise and work on the website and social media input. Jessica was even tweeting on behalf of the Branch whilst overseas! Dan also thanked David Johnson, Vice Chairman, for his continued input and Roger Smith for his invaluable planning knowledge. Penny Hudd was also thanked for her 'enormous effort' in coordinating the 'Plant Your Postcode' initiative and for developing great



relationships with Brighton City Council. Sally Pavey (Trustee) was introduced, and thanks passed for her work alongside CAGNE – fighting Gatwick’s plans for a second runway.

In the past 18 months:

- There was a decision by Centre Parcs to withdraw their plans near Crawley. Several bodies worked together to question the suitability of the location – an ancient woodland in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty close to a Site of Special Scientific Interest.
- CPRE has continued to support local groups fighting oil and gas exploration in Sussex – including Balcombe where the threat is ongoing.
- The Branch has recruited a new part-time Director, Paul Steedman. Paul has a background in working with environmental and wildlife member-based organisations. His initial role is to establish a clearer idea of the overall resources of the Branch.

5. Director’s Report – Paul Steedman

Paul thanked the members for their attendance at the AGM and for the warm welcome that he had received since joining. He reminded the meeting that CPRE Sussex was celebrating its 50th anniversary. This year being an opportunity to celebrate a membership organisation with a great track record with effective and supportive volunteers.

Thinking about the next 50 years, Paul explained that he wished to shape a new strategy with the Trustees – to help shape a greener future for Sussex – protecting, celebrating, and regenerating the countryside.

Paul mentioned the climate change challenges that we are facing and the effects of climate on our environment. He also mentioned the importance of encouraging countryside access for all - focusing on communities that do not necessarily feel welcome or comfortable in the countryside – particularly BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and people of colour) and the disabled. The rural cost of living crisis continues, and Paul highlighted the need to support social/affordable housing in the countryside.

The need for more wildlife-friendly farming is essential to encourage biodiversity. Paul commented that the Branch needs to do more to create farming partnerships. There is a continued need to promote green and clean technologies.

Paul also highlighted the importance of not losing focus on fundamental issues such as planning and campaigning to protect green spaces. The Branch continues to work with National Office and like-minded campaigners.

Volunteers play a pivotal role in the success of the Branch and Paul thanked Lesley Wilson for her efforts in encouraging more volunteers. He said that it is important to reach new audiences.

Achievements include:

- Levelling up of the Regeneration Bill.
- Climate change work - working with other organisations looking into rooftop solar systems. This has received a lot of MP support.
- Fighting unsuitable planning applications.
- Commenting on water supply issues.
- The launch of a new campaign against the 2nd runway at Gatwick.
- Supporting Balcombe residents, currently in the High Court, with fundraising efforts.



- The 'Plant a Postcode' Initiative. Paul showed a video of the work carried out with the support of CPRE Sussex.
- 'Rebooting' district groups - in particular the Brighton and Hove Group in the Autumn.
- Recruiting volunteers to monitor planning applications in their areas.
- The production of a new E-newsletter – distributed to the membership.
- Paul introduced Sally Pavey who updated the meeting on the exciting Countryside Day event being organised on 2nd September to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Branch. Sally talked about arrangements for the day including the need for volunteers to help. She asked that members share leaflets with friends and family.

6. Treasurers Report – Julian Hill

An abridged Financial Report for 2022 was published in the CPRE Sussex News and Annual Report 2022.

JH commented that it was critical that funding streams be identified as there had been a decline in membership and no legacies in 2022.

Expenditure had increased marginally – affected by staffing changes. Investment returns were down. Julian commented that he has been focussing on trying to reduce the deficit over the years and asked that members look at ways to increase income. At the meeting Stephen Horsfield suggested that rather than constant 'begging' from National Office and locally, the Branch organise an annual appeal – particularly if there is a specific need/target. He felt that the membership needs to be more generous and there is the opportunity to 'boost the reserves' with larger one-off donations. Julian Hill thanked Stephen for this suggestion but felt that we also need to look at other sources of funding in the first instance.

Julian thanked the permanent staff and Trustees for all their help and support.

Lord Egremont passed grateful thanks to Julian on behalf of the Branch for all his hard work and support of the years.

Resolution to adopt the Financial Report for the period ending 31st December 2022:

Proposer: Penny Hudd Second: Dan Osborn
Attending 32 members unanimous
Postal/Electronic Vote For 21 Against 0 Abstain 1
Lord Egremont confirmed the Resolution approved.

7. The Election of Officers and Trustees

Appointment of Vice Presidents

- a. On the Resolution to re-appoint the Vice Presidents Rodney Chambers & Margaret Moore, for a 1-year period votes received as follows:**

Proposed: Brian Kilkelly Seconded: Michael Warden

Attending 32 members unanimous
Postal/Electronic: For 22 Against 0 Abstain 0
Lord Egremont declared the resolution approved.



The countryside charity
Sussex

b. To appoint Libby Alexander, Monty Larkin, Deborah Speirs, Corinne Stuart, Jill Sutcliffe, Katherine Sykes as Trustees:

Proposed: Penny Hudd Seconded: David Johnson

Attending 32 members unanimous

Postal/Electronic: For 22 Against 0 Abstain 0

Lord Egremont declared the resolution approved.

c. To re-appoint Dr Roger Smith and David Johnson as Trustees:

Proposed: Marilyn Rawsom-Ekblom Seconded: David Johnson

Attending 32 members unanimous

Postal/Electronic: For 22 Against 0 Abstain 0

Lord Egremont declared the resolution approved.

d. To appoint Prof Dan Osborn as Chair for a 1-year period

Proposed: Roger Smith Seconded: Rodney Chambers

Attending 32 members unanimous

Postal/Electronic: For 22 Against 0 Abstain 0

Lord Egremont declared the resolution approved.

e. To appoint David Johnson as Vice Chair for a 1-year period

Proposed: Lord Egremont Seconded: Rodney Chambers

Attending 32 members unanimous

Postal/Electronic: For 22 Against 0 Abstain 0

Lord Egremont declared the resolution approved.

Lord Egremont asked for the approval of members to all appointments above en-bloc. The attending members voted unanimously in favour.

8. Any Other Business

John Harmer asked members to highlight the High Weald Network's 40th Anniversary at any events in their area. Thanks were passed to David Johnson and Lesley Wilson for their support of the High Weald Network. CPRE Sussex promised to promote the Anniversary of the formation of the group.

On behalf of CAGNE – an umbrella aviation group covering Sussex, Surrey and Kent – Sally Pavey updated the meeting on the plans for Gatwick's 2nd runway. She commented that the aviation industry is struggling to de-carbonise and that airplanes are likely to continue to fly using fossil fuels for decades. Horley and London are likely to suffer more from the pollution caused – due to the more frequent northerly winds. Sally commented that she was delighted that CPRE Sussex sees the need for the best legal team to fight this expansion and suggested crowdfunding and the lobbying of members for the much-needed financial support.

[CPRE Sussex the countryside charity, Registered Charity Number: 1156568](#)



Overall, there appear to be so many negatives with little/no economic benefits – except for the overseas owners of Gatwick Airport.

Sally commented that she would be available after the AGM to discuss the situation further with interested members and that leaflets were available.

Lord Egremont thanked Sally for her hard work and was hopeful that national CPRE would 'get behind' the drive to highlight the problems related to airport expansion.

Following a short tea break the following presentations took place:

Dan Osborn thanked Rodney Chambers for continuing to be Vice President for a further year. Rodney confirmed that he was very committed to everything CPRE stands for.

Dan also thanked Brian Kilkelly for his support of the Branch and informed the meeting that Brian is now CEO of The Landscape Research Group

Lesley Wilson was presented with a gift following 10 years of dedicated service as Office Administrator.

After taking on the role as President in 1981, Lord Egremont officially retired at the AGM. On behalf of CPRE Sussex, Dan thanked Lord Egremont for all his support and help over the years. Gifts were then presented. Lord Egremont thanked the meeting and commented that one of the wonderful aspects of being part of CPRE Sussex was being taken to, and learning about, other parts of the County. He commented on the 'wonderful members' and 'what great fun' it had been being involved in CPRE Sussex.

9. Alex Briggs – Weald to Waves

Dan Osborn then welcomed Alex Briggs to give a presentation on the 'Weald to Waves' initiative.

Signed 2nd July 2024