

**CAMPAIGN TO PROTECT RURAL ENGLAND**  
**Herefordshire Branch**

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at Hampton Bishop Village Hall on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2015

Attendance: 18 Members and 1 Guest.

1) 20 Apologies were received.

Ben Nash, the out-going Chairman, presided.

2) Minutes of the branch AGM held on 18th October 2014 were confirmed and adopted by the Meeting and signed by the Chairman. There were no matters arising.

3) Accounts & Treasurer's Report:

Peter Louis presented a summary of the certified accounts for year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2014, which are also available on our website. These have been examined by Thorne Widgey and approved by the Executive Committee.

Last year an annual deficit of £1 - 1.5k to our core budget was discussed and members were asked to increase their subscription to help with this. The good news is that this has worked, with an increase of income to £6k. Grateful thanks to the membership for its response.

A proportion of a substantial bequest from the estate of Mrs Barbara Maclese, which was mentioned in last year's report, has been invested in a Stewardship Income Fund. The Branch has entered into in house production of the annual report in cooperation with a local company, Prink. We now email this to the majority of our membership. Postage and production costs are therefore substantially down, which has enabled us to produce several newsletters. Thanks to our volunteers who have helped with the process and to our Branch administrator, Barbara Bromhead-Wragg. We wish her well in her recovery from an operation and, in the meantime, our executive committee are endeavouring to keep the show on the road.

The Branch is now recognised for Gift Aid.

Once again we make a plea for more volunteers. With a core income of £6k the Treasurer is happy with the position we find ourselves in.

Acceptance of the report was proposed by David Tilford and seconded by Robert Widdowson. This was approved unanimously.

4) Annual Report & Chairman's report:

Presented by Ben Nash. The Annual Report covers a great deal of material, the Council's core strategy plan, a survey of broiler units, whose numbers have surged in recent years. We are concerned by the accumulation of units, although the planning dept of Herefordshire Council do not appear to be. We held an event in June on neighbourhood development plans and how they could be used to protect the landscape. This went so well that we are holding another on 3<sup>rd</sup> November at Bartestree.

We remain concerned by the number of houses planned on high grade agricultural land such as Kings Acre Rd. One wonders what the future of Hereford as a city is, as the new developments do not meld well with the old. If planning really becomes a free for all it will be farmers who have tried to diversify who will be the losers.

Adoption of the report was proposed by Robert Widdowson and seconded by David Tilford and agreed unanimously.

5) Election of Officers & Committee Members:

The following were elected unopposed and unanimously:

President: - Vacant

Chair – Ben Nash (proposed by David Phelps, seconded by Richard Williams)

Vice-Chairs – Bob Widdowson and Tony Geeson (proposed by Peter Louis and seconded by Ros Bradbury)

Treasurer – Peter Louis (proposed by Bob Widdowson, seconded by Ben Nash)

Secretary – David Phelps (proposed by Ian Jardin and seconded by Bob Widdowson)

Committee Members – Dr Richard Williams, Ros Bradbury, Richard Stow (proposed by Ben Nash, seconded by Peter Louis)

6) Resolutions: None received.

7) AOB: David Tilford commended the annual report and its professional standards, well worth spreading around. He also thanked the committee for their work. Formal business concluded at 2.40pm

8) Tim Hoverd, Archaeological Projects Manager, Herefordshire Council, gave a presentation on “The Changing Landscape of Herefordshire.”

Herefordshire has been settled since the mid Neolithic Period. Gravel quarries give much evidence of post glacial conditions, thanks to pollen, seeds, insect and snail remains. Shows rich grassland, grazed by many herbivores and colder than today.

Later warming led to heath and scrub and summer visits from nomadic hunters.

From 5000BC woodland developed. By 3000BC evidence of impact of humans with forest clearance. No evidence of post Roman woodland increase. Rotherwas Ribbon – processional way c2700 BC. Re-instated c2400BC, so must have been remembered. Area source of cattle for triennial festivals at Stonehenge and Avebury. Late Bronze Age – larger farmsteads (30 -40 people) and 36 “hillforts”. Credenhill 2<sup>nd</sup> largest in Britain. Shows large scale organization and population.

Roman Herefordshire largely peaceful and source of corn and wool.

Good area for water mills, extensively mentioned in Domesday Book. Vast areas under plough in medieval period, ploughed deeply with 8 oxen teams. Few hedges and population of 100,000 in 1300.

1300-1310 yrs of drought, followed by 20 yrs of wet warm conditions, followed by Black Death, reduced population which did not reach same level until 1891.

Threats: Potatoes, needing deep ploughing, polytunnels, solar farms, broiler units and asparagus (needing deep laid pipes).

Suggested further reading: “The Killing of the Countryside”, Graham Harvey (1997).