

SURREY TREE WARDEN NETWORK

Minutes of the General Meeting and AGM Saturday 16th October 2021 at St John's Church Hall, Tadworth, Surrey

Trefor Hogg and Patricia Brookwick welcomed everyone to the Tadworth meeting, home of the Tadworth & Walton Tree Wardens.

Jon Stokes, The Tree Council Director of Trees, Science and Research, was the first speaker of the morning.

Jon remarked that it was 32 years since he began his work with The Tree Council (TTC) and that some fantastic internal growth had taken place over the last eighteen months, with the charity growing from six members of staff to twenty under the keen direction of CEO Sarah Lom.

Jon provided information about TTC and touched on the annual campaigns of Walk in the Woods, Tree Care, Seed Gathering and National Tree Week.

The international focus surrounding climate change was then addressed, this included information concerning the response to the climate emergency by our own local councils and central government. Jon told members that a new flow of funding has been developed nationally to slow, and hopefully help to reverse, the decline of our natural environment and increase the overall response to climate change. This includes new initiatives like the National Nature for Climate Fund, the Treescape Fund, numerous County Council funds and fantastic grants appearing for tree warden groups via TTC. The importance of Biosecurity was discussed with a review of the dangers we currently face, including Ash Dieback and OPM, potential threats and methods available to negate these issues. Network Rail for example have committed to focusing on biodiversity, then we have the recording of current hedgerows and the planting of new hedging and hedgerow trees through TTC's 'Close the Gap' initiative and the Schools Programme for young people is proving very fruitful - these include Forces for Nature, Orchards for Shools and the recognition of Young Tree Champions. One of our young ambassadors for trees will even address the forthcoming COP 26 meeting in Glasgow next month.

Jon closed the session by thanking everyone for their efforts and commitment as tree wardens.

Paul Wood, the author of several books including 'London's Street Trees', 'London is a Forest', 'London Tree Walks', the 'Great Trees of London Map' and a revised edition of 'London's Street Trees', provided members with a very engaging talk on street trees, a topic very close to Paul's heart. Combined with a slide show we learned of some very unusual and exciting trees to be found in London and other urban environments. Paul's next book is currently underway with a focus on special trees throughout the country, members were asked to forward any suggestions they may have to him via his web page <https://thestreettree.com>. Signed copies of Paul's books were offered for sale on the day.

Annual General Meeting

Election of Chairperson: Jon Stokes was appointed to Chair the meeting.

Apologies for Absence: Apologies were received from Helen Williams, Chris Cutcliffe, Fiona Thomson, Anne Richards, Gilly Gibbins, Adrian Allen.

Minutes of the previous AGM The last Surrey Tree Warden Network AGM was held on 8th June 2019 at the Riverside Arts Centre, Spelthorne. Jon Stokes from TTC acted as Chairman, Chris Pead as Secretary and Dave Pope as Treasurer. The Executive Committee (Chris Pead, Trefor Hogg, Dave Pope, Dave Woods, Patricia Brookwick, Sue Henderson, Rod Thorn, Liz Ramsay and Sally Pemberton) were confirmed by the meeting with Chris Pead as Secretary and Dave Pope as Treasurer.

No AGM was held in 2020 following the instructions received from the Charity Commission that due to the Coronavirus pandemic it was not practicable for charities to hold a formal AGM and that instead the Trustees should by resolution suspend the holding of an AGM. There are therefore no minutes for the 2020 AGM.

Instead of a formal AGM, charities were instructed by the Charity Commission to file their Accounts following a resolution by the Trustees to approve them. Surrey Tree Warden Network has followed those instructions with the required Annual Return for 2019 filed on 21st September 2020 and for 2020 filed on 10th April 2021 .

Annual Report - The annual Report was provided by Chairman Trefor Hogg; this was circulated to members and is available for further viewing from the STWN website.

Treasurer's Report – The Treasurer's Report was provided by Treasurer Dave Pope; this was circulated to members and is available for further viewing from the STWN website.

Election of Honorary Officers:

One nomination had been received for the position of Chairman; the post held by Trefor Hogg. The nomination was received from Kevin Greening, nominating Steven McCormick, both from the Epsom & Ewell branch of tree wardens. Chairman Trefor Hogg and Nominee Steven McCormick each gave a brief talk concerning their ideas for the role of Chairman to members. The candidates left the room and a vote, by show of hands, followed. Steven McCormick was elected by 19 votes to 13.

Patricia Brookwick was re-appointed as Secretary and Dave Pope as Treasurer.

Resolved: That Steven McCormick be elected as Chairman of the STWN and that Patricia Brookwick (Secretary) and Dave Pope (Treasurer) be re-elected with no objections.

Election of Executive Committee Members:

The following Committee Members were re-appointed: Liz Ramsay, David Woods, Anne Richards, Sue Henderson, Sally Pemberton, Rod Thorn.

Resolved: That the committee members be re-elected with no objections.

Close of AGM

Presentation to former STWN Secretary Chris Pead

Trefor Hog presented two wonderful books to Chris Pead, former Secretary to the STWN. Pictures and messages from the committee had been included within the front covers. Chris was thanked for his long and knowledgeable service as Secretary to the Network and for his tireless work for the benefit of trees in general.

Lunch and refreshments followed with the sale of Paul Wood's books, STWN Christmas Cards and Tree Warden Tabards. Distribution of the free tree guide 'A time for Trees' was kindly provided by Sam Village. A fundraising raffle was held.

Sam Village, TTC's National Tree Warden Coordinator, presented a full training session for members using the first module of TTC's new training materials, 'Tree Warden Induction'. This session was very informative and provided a great opportunity for all members to review exactly what it means to be a tree warden. Four training modules have been released so far: Tree Warden Induction, Trees and the Law, Tree Biology and Threats and Challenges. A further four modules are being produced: Tree Planting, Managing and Caring for Trees, Tree Health and Organising Tree Events and Projects.

Afternoon Walk: A group of members enjoyed a walk to see a few of the 147 street trees planted by the local tree wardens. These included Lime, Silver Birch, Ginkgo, Himalayan Birch, Oak, Whitebeam and a Dawn Redwood. The trees were carefully observed and commented on by Jon and the group. The walk moved on to a section of local Common Land where three Veteran Beech trees were admired, the spot where a group photograph was taken.



Quiz: Those not wanting to take part in the walk stayed back to enjoy a tree quiz prepared by Tadworth & Walton Tree Champion Gina Parr-Davies. A copy of which can be downloaded from both the STWN and Tadworth and Walton Facebook pages.

Tea and homemade cakes followed back at the hall where Dave Pope thanked members for attending and for the Tadworth & Walton Tree Warden group hosting an enjoyable and motivating day.