

The Watercress Way

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

at The Alresford Drove at the entrance to Newdown Farm opposite the site of the old Lunways Inn at 7:30pm on Thursday 21 June 2018



This meeting reports on the period from June 2017 until June 2018.

The 9 Trustees are the only members of The Watercress Way. Members of the public were invited as observers.

Attending: Jackie Porter, Jim Thompson, Kim Adams, Mike Collis, Tony Langridge, Clive Cook, Phil Songhurst-Thonet, Malcolm Prince, Bruce Graham

Observers: Jill Prince, Chris Cornell, Dawn Cornell, Lynsey Sweeney, Janet (Railway cottages)

Apologies: Graham Lambert (Railway Ramblers)

1. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting on 28 June 2017: Minutes agreed and signed by the Chairman

Matters arising: None

2. Meet the Trustees

New Trustee and Treasurer Phil Songhurst-Thonet introduced himself and explained his business background and interest in the work of The Watercress Way.

Phil takes over from Jim Thompson from this meeting and they have arranged a handover session.

Other Trustees gave brief descriptions of some of the work undertaken during the year.

3. Report from Chairman:

- **Annual report: Progress so far and plans for 2018-19**

Jackie thanked the observers for their interest in the work of the charity. She thanked all the trustees for their hard work over the past year. She presented a written report on the progress during the last year available via <http://www.thewatercressway.org.uk/>
She highlighted:

- Increased awareness and use of the Watercress Way which is now fully waymarked. In particular, the organised walk at Easton in March was well attended and there is a forthcoming one in Sutton Scotney. Worthy Runners are making extensive use of the paths and 6 members completed the marathon distance of the entire route on our Dusk to Dawn Day in April.
- Support from the SDNPA in the development of our Strategic Plan and professionally producing it to give greater support for grant applications.
- The plans to open up the bridge at Sutton Scotney. We have a licence from HCC and are working with Sutton Manor to obtain a licence for their section. After this we can make bids for funding for clearance. This will be in the region of £50 000 and will be our first major project.
- We will be erecting 3 interpretation boards and 4 benches on the route for which we have already obtained funding.

- We will continue to work to improve the ecology on the Watercress Way. We have had support from SDNP volunteers on the Itchen Abbas section and Trustees have also worked on other sections. We are grateful for the work done by Worthys Conservation Volunteers at Worthy Down Halt.

4. Report from Treasurer:

- **Accounts to year end April 2018:** The Treasurer, Jim Thompson, presented the audited annual accounts which show a healthy balance of £5449.05. However, the majority of these funds are grants specifically for a variety of projects including interpretation boards and benches.
- **Current funds and planned fundraising:** For funding to run the charity and publicise our activities we are reliant on donations by individuals and sponsorship by local businesses. These barely cover the cost of our very popular leaflets and other expenses so we are always looking for support from Friends of the Line and the general public. We are confident that we can raise funds for major projects like Sutton Scotney from the land fill tax and from the Community Infrastructure Levy.

5. Public Question Time: The observers were very supportive of the aims and activities of the charity. Chris Cornell has been active in assisting with the history of the railway and has put some information on our Facebook page which has garnered a lot of interest. Lynsey is part of a group in Micheldever who try to keep local pathways clear and well used. She offered the groups support to our volunteers. Janet lives in the Railway cottages at Itchen Abbas and is interested in the history of that section of the line.

6. Date of next meeting: Thursday 20 June 2019

Mike Collis

Secretary, The Watercress Way

22 June 2018