

Stroud Woodland Co-op AGM

3rd March 2013

The Exchange, Brick Row, Stroud

Present

David Shrubsall	Perdita Dawson	Karen Saunders
Stella Parkes	Mark Harrison	Nell Saunders
Seb Buckton	Martin Large	Theo Saunders
Alice Goodenough	Helen Keating	Ben Spencer, Secretary
Andy Treacher	Richard Keating, Chair	
Mike Dawson	Jackie Rowanly	

Apologies

Ruth Illingworth	Kate Shrubsall	Simon and Elaine Arundel
Ali Coles	Andy Freedman	Claire and Paul Sheridan
Ruth Davey	Gabriel Kaye	

1 Welcome

Participants were welcomed to the second Stroud Woodland Co-op AGM.

2. Receive draft accounts / balance sheet and the Directors' report

The attached report was presented along with the attached accounts and balance sheet.

The meeting were pleased to accept the report and accounts and thanked the current Directors for their efforts.

Ben Spencer noted that Director and Officer liability insurance had not been taken out during the previous financial year.

Action: Simon and Elaine Arundel to be consulted by directors on what procedures need to be in place to avoid having to take out this additional insurance.

Alice to investigate costs of training members to make tree assessments.

Ben to consult with the Small Woods Organisation and Forestry Commission.

3 Confirmation of exemption from auditing

It was agreed that the Co-op should continue to claim exemption from auditing.

4 Election of Directors

In accordance with our rules two of the longest serving directors, Martin Large and Richard Keating, stood down. Martin said he wanted to take a year's break from the role and was thanked for his efforts in helping to set up Stroudwoods. Richard Keating was happy to stand again. Mark Harrison was also proposed.

The directors for 2013/2014 are Seb Buckton, Alice Goodenough, Richard Keating (Chair), Jackie Rowanly, Mark Harrison (Treasurer) and Ben Spencer (Secretary).

The new directors were thanked.

5. Minutes and matters arising from last AGM

a) Process of returning and selling shares

Ben had followed the agreed process: 8 shares had been returned and sold back to 6 new members: Simon and Elaine Arundel, Stella Parkes, Claire and Paul Sheridan, Kate and David Shrubsall. John Rees and Nick and Fiona Mills bought two blocks of shares.

Three additional members had since asked to return their shares.

Mark also noted that over time, due to inflation the monetary value of the shares was reducing and that in the long term people buying them for £500 may not value them as much. We agreed that the co-operative hadn't bought Folly Wood as a way of making profit but that we wanted to 'inflation proof' the value of shares.

Action: It was agreed that the availability of the three shares should be publicised with a deadline for purchase of the end of April. Ben to manage the process. Members to invite new people to join.

Martin to investigate how other co-operatives deal with the issue of declining value of shares over time.

Directors to produce a report within eight to ten years addressing how to deal with the inflation issue.

b) Printed list of members at the Exchange

These had been put in place.

c) Group structure and activity groups

This was discussed in the context of the activity plan, see below.

d) Discussion papers on the following topics were included in the directors' report:

Shares and organisations – the approach proposed was agreed.

Action: Directors to review any application for shares by new organisations as they arose.

Firewood – the approach proposed was agreed.

Action: Firewood group and activity days to be set up during the year on an ad hoc basis. Ben to check chainsaw insurance with Small Woods. Ben, Richard and Mark to propose dates.

Uses of timber - the approach proposed was agreed.

Action: Firewood group to oversee wider woodland management and processes for creating and distributing other products – such as more planking, which had proved popular.

Richard to produce an audit of what was already in the wood.

Voluntary annual contributions – this had been successful in raising £300 (which was added to £80 from planks and £175 from a case study). Helen was thanked for her work on this.

This amount is not sufficient to cover the ongoing costs of managing the wood, these include admin costs of £400 (insurance, FSA return) and additional money needed for work on removing dangerous trees, thinning, materials etc.

Action: Helen and Stella to lead a positively orientated drive to encourage more members to contribute £10-£20 each year to the running of the co-op.

Further woodland acquisitions – the issues raised in the directors report were noted.

Action: Richard K and Alice to produce a more detailed discussion paper by June

6. Review of the current activity plan progress, future plans and how to allocate our existing funds

The draft activity plan was circulated and discussed. Additional items suggested included a chainsaw course for members, a woodland activity day and many more informal socials.

Actions: Directors to seek more accurate budgets for the various tasks from active group members and finalise the budget.

Richard to produce a finalised plan.

The directors report and action plan for 2013 are here:

<http://www.stroudwoods.org.uk/stroud-woodland-cooperative/agm-and-core-group-meeting-notes.html>