

The Friends of the Ridgeway

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at 2.00 pm on Sunday, 24th April, 2016

at the Village Hall (Belleme Room), Goring-on-Thames,

Those attending being counted as 27 the Chairman declared the Meeting quorate and called the Meeting to order.

1. **Apologies:** The Chairman asked the Secretary to read the list of members who had expressed their apologies for non-attendance. This comprised 11 names, including those of Vice-Presidents David Gauke MP and David Lidington MP, and out-going Chairman Ian Ritchie. The Secretary expressed thanks for the donation made by two members unable to attend.
2. **Minutes:** The Chairman noted that the Minutes of the 2015 AGM, held on 26th April, 2015, had been approved as a correct record by the Executive Committee at its meeting on 28th July, 2015, and signed by the then Chairman, in accordance with the Constitution.
3. **Matters Arising:** The Chairman noted with pleasure that all our Vice-Presidents had been re-elected at the General Election and congratulated them. He also noted that the Chairmanship had been left vacant, as detailed at Minute 9, and that this omission had been addressed by his co-option shortly afterwards.
It was proposed by Ian Bullock, seconded by Wendy Tobin, agreed unanimously that the Minutes be ratified.
4. **Annual Report:** It was noted that a Notice of this Meeting had been published in the printed Annual Reports circulated to members, including a letter from the Chairman, and that copies of the formal Trustees' Annual Report, the Annual Accounts for 2015, the Hon Examiner's Report, and the full AGM Notice and Agenda, have been provided to members attending today.

The Chairman observed that the Association is at an interesting stage, having achieved under Ian Ritchie's leadership a notable reduction in damage to the Trail by off-road vehicles, and the establishment of the Ridgeway Partnership; and he thanked Ian and Jeff Goddard for their efforts, supported by the Committee. Having achieved these primary objectives, questions arose about the future role of the organisation. The Association could disband, having largely achieved its primary objective, but, after discussion, the Committee agreed that the need to ensure the protection of The Ridgeway continues in the present and future just as in the past. This need is highlighted by current funding issues for the Ridgeway Partnership, that still awaits its grant commitment by Natural England for the current year. He and Jeff actively participate in the Partnership Meetings, but we maintain our independence.

The Chairman announced two initiatives this year, the first a drive to increase membership, to ensure that we continue to be a strong voice as the only organisation representing the whole Ridgeway and only the Ridgeway. Members will soon receive a mailing of cards and application forms that we urge them to use to recruit friends and acquaintances as new members. The second is the establishment of the Swire Ridgeway Arts Prize, made possible by a munificent donation by a member. This annual Prize will have four categories, for painting, photography, sculpture and writing, and £1,000 will be distributed in prizes each year. Our aim is to get people involved in the more creative aspects of the Ridgeway.

We will continue to do more to improve communications with members and with the public, through our web-site, newsletters and social media, through our membership of the new Ridgeway Partnership, and with the support of members.

The Chairman thanked the Committee for their contributions during the year, also mentioning the members of the Vale of White Horse Local Group Committee. He noted that there remain two vacancies on the Committee and urged members to volunteer to fill these.

5 **Treasurers Report and Annual Accounts:** The Chairman then called on our Treasurer, John Edgerton, to present his Report and the Annual Accounts for 2015, as printed in the Annual Reports circulated. John noted that 2015 had been a financial success for the Association, with a generous bequest from a member, and a further donation to be used to support the Ridgeway Partnership. However, without this income we would have barely covered our costs, with membership continuing to decline, and a large number of subscriptions in arrears. Funds in hand total £23,225, of which £9,194 is restricted.

Reporting also on the membership, John noted that this has fallen to 423 paid up, with a number of subscriptions still outstanding.

No questions on the Accounts being raised, adoption of the Annual Report and Accounts for 2015 was proposed by Jim Gunter, seconded by Richard Duggan, and agreed unanimously.

6 **Honorary Auditor/Independent Examiner:** The re-appointment of Stephen Sherman FCA, as Hon Auditor/Independent Examiner, who has confirmed his willingness to serve for another year in that capacity, had been proposed by Ian Ritchie and seconded by John Edgerton, and was agreed unanimously.

7 **Election of President and Vice-Presidents:** The Chairman thanked the President and Vice-Presidents for their continued support, and proposed that they should be re-elected en bloc. A resolution for their re-appointment was proposed by Wendy Tobin, seconded by Tim Lewis and carried unanimously.

8 **Election of Officers and Committee Members/Trustees**

Chairman: The Chairman stood down at this point and handed over the Chair to Jeff Goddard, who observed that, as noted earlier, it was not possible to complete the election of the Chairman at the last AGM. However, he and Ian Ritchie had met Anthony Burdall, and recommended to the Committee who agreed that he be co-opted to the Committee in this capacity. Anthony, a Chartered Civil Engineer with Halcrow, now retired, is a keen sailor, photographer and walker, and has led U3A locally and in the Thames Valley. Anthony's election as Chairman had been proposed by Ian Ritchie, and seconded by Jeff, and it was agreed unanimously. Anthony thereupon resumed the Chair.

Anthony then noted that the following had been proposed and seconded as Officers and Trustees as follows:-

<u>Officers:</u>	<u>Proposed</u>	<u>Seconded</u>
Secretary (Jeff Goddard):	Sally Barnes	Ian Ritchie
Treasurer (John Edgerton):	Jeff Goddard	Geoff Dare
<u>Trustees:</u>		
Sally Barnes	: John Edgerton	Jim Gunter
Geoff Dare	Jim Gunter	John Edgerton
Jim Gunter	Jeff Goddard	Geoff Dare

With the consent of the meeting their election en bloc was proposed and they were all elected unanimously.

The President, Lord Bradshaw, then spoke, commending the Committee for their efforts. The Ridgeway remains a beacon of good maintenance and organisation.

The Committee were also commended on the presentation of the Annual Report.

9 **Other Business:** No other business was raised.

There being no further business, the Chairman declared the Meeting closed, and thanked members for their attendance.

Signed: Anthony Burdall, Chairman

Date: 12th July, 2017