

Colwall Orchard Trust
Minutes of the 49th Meeting of the Board
on Wednesday 17th September 2020, 7:30 pm, by zoom teleconference

Agenda item	Action
<p>Present: Andy Ball, Chris Blake, Peter Hughes (Treasurer), Peter Key, Pam McCarthy, Andrew Spray (Chair), Wendy Thompson (Secretary), Deb Turnbull, Jilly Rosser, Lisanne Llewellyn, Lindsay Williams</p>	
<p>1 Apologies for absence: None Welcome to new Board members: The Board welcomed Lisanne Llewellyn and the return of Lindsay Williams as co-opted Colwall Orchard Trust Directors and Trustees.</p>	
<p>2 Minutes: The minutes of the 48th board meeting held on 20th May 2020 were approved and signed.</p>	
<p>2b Matters arising from previous meetings The matters arising report circulated in advance of the meeting was noted by the Board. In addition, AS agreed to inform Tim Dixon that DT had agreed to coordinate the tree order in 2020/21. A summary of outstanding actions is attached to the minutes.</p>	
<p>3 Health and safety report AB was thanked for his written report to the Board. There were no questions, and the report was noted.</p>	
<p>4 Organisational Risk Assessment Review WT was thanked for her written report. In response to a question about who would prepare financial reserves policy, Peter Hughes agreed to do this by adding a statement to the Finance Policy. He felt that a reserve of £20,000 was plenty and that if this reserve were reached the Board would need to discuss and agree only essential expenditure such as for insurance, health and safety, electricity and water. The report was noted.</p>	PH
<p>5 Finance</p> <p>a. Quarterly report PH was thanked for his written report. He added that the current account balance of that day was £25,756.91 which was around £2,000 less than when he reported in May. PH added that the water bill was now paid by a monthly direct debit of £72.72 to cover the cost of the high bill received for several years water supply.</p> <p>b. Income and Expenditure analysis The Income and Expenditure analysis circulated on 23rd June was noted by the Board with thanks to WT.</p>	
<p>6a Estates The approval for high level expenditure for fencing and water supply to Lugg's Mill was agreed by all Board members by email on 3rd June 2020. The approval for high level expenditure for the purchase of equipment was agreed by all Board members by email on 3rd June 2020.</p>	
<p>6b Condition of trees in Colwall Village Garden Community Orchard AB was thanked for his written report. In response to questions he explained:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The clearing of grass from under each tree had been simplified by removing 6 inches of wire at the bottom of each tree cage. Removing the cattle proof tree 	

	<p>cages had been considered but they were in good condition and replacing these with sheep proof tree cages would be expensive.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The wood-chip mulch used around each tree had been produced from the tree works undertaken at Lugg's Mill. There was potential to get more wood-chip for no charge either from work on our own sites or from a Tree Surgeon. 	
6c	<p>Fencing of pond at Colwall Village Garden AS was thanked for his paper. In discussion the following points were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A fence did not need a secure gate but would act as a visible feature to delineate between areas of the orchard. It would prevent visitors (perhaps children) running into the pond by accident. However, the pond should still be accessible to people visiting the site. If nothing was done the Trustees would leave themselves open to criticism if something went wrong. Grazing would not be affected by a fence as access to the area by sheep could still be provided. Dogs in the pond might cause contamination by neo-nicotinoids and they also disturbed the sediment and habitat at the bottom of the pond. The CVG Management Plan stated that dogs should be under close control in the orchard but this was difficult to enforce. Both Worcestershire and Herefordshire Wildlife Trusts had been consulted and both tend to fence off ponds (but not necessarily bigger water features such as lakes and rivers). A fence that was aesthetically pleasing was considered important and could support the creation a new habitat in the pond area. Pond experts (and COG members) Richard and Phyl King had offered to survey the pond and advise on its management. <p>The Board agreed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> To accept the offer of a pond survey and advice from Richard and Phyl King. Provide fencing if the survey advice supports the decision. If a fence was provided to get costs for something aesthetically pleasing. 	LW
7	<p>Events, Education and Training</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Apple Day – the Board had agreed by email dated 5th September that Apple Day 2020 should not take place WT was thanked for her written reports on Events, Education and Training. In response to a question she confirmed that she had not yet been in touch formally with schools about juicing. It was agreed that COG should make tentative enquiries to the local schools. Any activity would need to be carefully considered to ensure it ran safely. 	WT
8	<p>Juicing The Board thanked PK for the paper. It was agreed that the COG capacity to juice and pasteurise should be scaled up slowly over several years and not to purchase a larger pasteuriser at this stage. On storage of a crate of new bottles, the Board were advised that they were well wrapped and could be outside, but it was agreed that storage needed to be considered. The Board agreed to the proposed expenditure of £1,146.46 on new equipment.</p>	
9	<p>Orchard contract work The Board thanked AB for the paper circulated for Board views on 19th August. AB had replied to the responses received with some changes to the original proposal including an amendment to pricing. These changes were confirmed by AS on 25th August. All papers are on the minute file. AB to provide a final version of the paper.</p>	AB
10	COT relationship with Colwall Allotment Association	

	<p>COT was grateful to Peter Key and Ron Ashman for discussing the possibility of the Colwall Allotment Association (CAA) becoming a COT committee and for putting forward proposals to COT.</p> <p>COT confirmed its support for the allotments, but some board members had concerns about some of the proposals. There were also questions relating to the insurance cover, and the health and safety of the allotment tenants.</p> <p>Following a discussion most Board members confirmed that they would prefer the CAA to be able to stay independent of COT and for it to have legal status to allow it to sign a lease with COT as landlord. This would involve the CAA either becoming an unincorporated trust or an incorporated charity or community interest company. That was for the CAA to decide.</p> <p>If the CAA was unable to do either of these COT would consider the setting up an allotment committee further but a decision would be subject to details and the outcome of more research into the insurance, health and safety and finances.</p> <p>This was a difficult discussion and there were different views around the table. As the Board did not come to a decision, members were invited to send individual responses to Andrew Spray by 23rd September which he would collate and prepare a response to the CAA.</p>	All AS
11	<p>Projects and Funding</p> <p>The Board noted the content of the paper which summarised progress and activity on the following projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional Orchards for the Future Initiative (TOFI); • Lugg’s Mill bridge • Lugg’s Mill footpath; • Lugg’s Mill improvements (interpretation panel); • Green prescriptions – The board had agreed by email that it was keen to be involved but that this is an exploratory stage and any further decision will be mindful of the resource and other implications; • Tree Council grant; • Other potential funding. 	
12	<p>Any other business</p> <p>a. DT announced that after serving on the Board for over 9 years, she had decided to stand down at the next AGM in 2021. The Board thanked Deb for giving notice and hoped that she would continue to provide her valued knowledge and expertise as a volunteer.</p> <p>b. PH reported that he would begin the hand-over of the Treasurer role to LL the following week and that he will start to bow out of his Trustee role.</p>	
13	<p>Date and time of next meeting: Wednesday 2nd December 2020, 7:30pm</p>	