

Colwall Orchard Trust
63rd Meeting of the Board on Wednesday 20 March 2024, 7pm
Apple Packing Shed, Colwall Village Garden, WR13 6HB

MINUTES (FINAL)

No	Item	Action
1	<p>Present: Lindsay Williams (Chair), Chris Kelly (Treasurer), Chris Blake, Clive Killick, Pam McCarthy, Jenny Papettas, Jilly Rosser, Lynne Drew (Minute Secretary).</p> <p>Apologies for absence None</p>	
2	<p>Minutes of 62nd Board meeting held on 13 December 2023 The draft minutes were approved for signing.</p>	
3	<p>Outstanding Actions and Matters Arising Matters Arising discussed at the meeting which are not included in the minuted items below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AP57.6a: Jenny presented the draft Equipment Loan Policy and answered the Board's queries. The Policy is required to provide a better system to keep track of our loaned equipment whilst being mindful of requirements of the Equipment at Work regulations. The Board discussed the restriction on scythes, sickles and chain saws as the more dangerous items and the use of the new GDPR compliant loan book for recording the loans. Some difficulties in the usability of the loan book were raised and it may need to be changed. It was agreed to move forward with the Policy in its current form and trial the use of the loan book for a period. The policy and book will be reviewed in six months' time (AP63.1 JP to publish final policy wording and review after six month trial.) AP58.8: There were two suggestions for accessing emergency medical and next of kin details of volunteers. Firstly, to add details to the membership database which can be accessible to the Trustee or Leaders via Google Drive. This can be accessed on mobile phones. Secondly, volunteers could carry a card with them with the necessary details. It was agreed to go with the first suggestion as a card may be lost or forgotten. (AP62.7 CB and LW to collect up to date emergency medical and next of kin details to be added to the membership database. Once added Leaders to be instructed on how to access in an emergency.) AP60.6: It was agreed to remove this as an action as it is ongoing continuous H&S work. AP61.2b: The addition of CCTV camera raises privacy and GDPR issues. It was agreed to put this on hold for the time being. All other actions had been updated via email prior to the meeting and these updates were distributed to the Board via the Action List Document COT63-3. Lindsay updated the Board that following the incident at CVG in September, four arrests have been made. Those involved have agreed to a restitution process and will come to COG to meet with us in due course. (AP63.2 LW to update incident sheet.) 	<p>Jenny AP63.1</p> <p>Chris B/ Lindsay/ Lynne AP62.7</p> <p>Lindsay AP63.2</p>

Rhinda Williams¹

4	<p>Board decisions by email Since the last meeting the Board had considered by email the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request from LW to use £1000 donation at Mistletoe Fair to help plant an orchard at the primary school and to donate a tepee to the school for their Forest School area. (Approved by Board majority 29 December 2023. Subsequently the donor requested the donation was used for a different purpose so a more recent donation has been allocated for this instead) Request from LW for permission to spend £480 towards sound system and toilets for the Wassail. (Approved by Board 30 December 2023) Request from JR to purchase two ladders. Total cost £670. (Approved by Board 7 February 2024) 	
5	<p>Finance Chris K presented the financial report covering the last quarter (Dec 2023 – Feb 2024).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All but one of the allotment tenancies have now been paid. The Board thanked Sue Armstrong for all her hard work during the tenancy renewal process. The new savings accounts are now set up and open. Finances are strong follow receipt of our grant and several generous donations. Chris explained the need for a strong paper trail for auditing purposes and evidence of authorisation by the Board of all expenditure especially when using contractors. As a charity we need robust processes to guard against fraud, error or other irregularities. Lindsay explained that due to varying volunteer numbers and the changeable weather, advance planning is extremely difficult. The Board agreed that a Call off contract could be used to agree Steve Stanford's hours in advance. (AP62.10 CKI to draft the necessary document for Steve and send to LW/CKe.) <p>Chris K was thanked for his report.</p>	<p>Clive AP62.10</p>
6	<p>Health & Safety Clive presented his report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> JR and LW noted there had been two recent minor accidents. Clive asked that he is informed when new entries are made. Clive noted that following the Wassail, flares and fires were an issue in the windy weather. This needs to be reviewed and considered for future years. JR explained that she had struggled to find certain items in the first aid kit bags. LW said there are certain items he would like to be omitted. CB said his is happy for any suggestions for additions to the kits. (AP63.3 All to send suggestions of any items that they would like to be added to the first aid kits to Chris B. Chris B will also discuss this with the Leaders.) A selection of the Safe Ways of Working Documents are available to everyone to access on the COG website.¹ <p>Clive was thanked for his report.</p>	<p>All/Chris B AP63.3</p>
7	<p>Safeguarding Jenny noted that there had been no safeguarding issues since the last meeting and there was nothing to report.</p>	

¹ <https://colwallorchardgroup.org/health-and-safety-1>

8	<p>Making more use of our fruit as food</p> <p>Jilly presented her report 'Finding uses for our surplus apple crop.' There have been two previous reports to the Board on this subject. Jilly will distribute the 'Produce Strategy' report, written by Peter Key in 2020, following the meeting.</p> <p>The Board discussed the various suggestions and observations from the report. LW and JP would like to involve the local community to encourage them to use the surplus. We do not have the infrastructure to increase juicing capacity. It was agreed that the starting point would be offering surplus to volunteers. They will be informed when fruit is available. Information and a demonstration would be given at the beginning of a volunteer session. Then volunteers can pick if they wish at the end of the session when there are still others onsite to provide advice/supervision. This will be kept under review and with the plan to 'up the ante' in the future.</p>	
9	<p>Renovations to the Apple Packing Shed</p> <p>Nothing new to report. It is hoped that Steve Sanford will have more time available now planting has finished to looking into suitable builders. LW is also working on funding opportunities. David Armitage from MHNL is investigating if any funding can be provided.</p> <p>We need to go back to planning to make changes. (AP60.8 If possible, a Board member will make the necessary application to change the planning application. If not possible by 8 April a contractor will be used to action this.)</p>	<p>Lindsay/ Pam/Clive/ Jenny AP60.8</p>
10	<p>Grants</p> <p>Lindsay presented his Grant report. He suggested focusing funds from school visits on making more child friendly areas on the sites. The Board agreed. Once the FiPL grants run out there will be a greater focus on grants for education work.</p> <p>LW was thanked for all his work on the grants as well as other Leaders who have been involved in the grant work.</p>	
11	<p>Events (including Wassail)</p> <p>Lindsay presented his update on Events.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Wassail had been stressful to organise. Bob is stepping down from his role as organiser but will continue as theatrical producer. Jane Healing has agreed to take over as Events Coordinator for COG and will set up committees for the larger events. • The Board agreed as the Wassail is our biggest members only event and a good way of promoting COG that a financial loss is acceptable. It was agreed that expenditure/costs could remain at the same level for next year's event. JP suggested that donations could be taken using buckets to relieve any administrative burden. • The procession route was discussed but it was agreed that the current route is good as it avoids walking on roads. • It was agreed to keep the Wassail as a members only event as numbers need to be controlled but the school and the youth group could possibly be included. • LW suggested asking Nicholas Gates to come and do a talk as part of an evening arranged by COG similar to the recent Celebrating our Hedges event. His fee is £150. In addition, there would be the cost of hiring the village hall. The Board agreed to this event to be held possibly in November 2024. 	

12	<p>Artwork and display banners</p> <p>The Board had previously discussed the need to update our current display boards. Mhari Brown and Lindsay have been looking into an eye catching new versatile display that could be easily erected at talks or events. Maire Therese King, a wildlife artist, has produced a sketch drawing (circulated to the Board prior to the meeting) which could be used on a display stand / poster etc.</p> <p>The price for the artwork will be up to £1000 then any display stands will be purchased separately. The Board agreed to the expenditure on the artwork commissioning and will consider further how we will reproduce this on stands etc.</p>	
13	<p>Car Club Pickup</p> <p>We have been informed by Robin Coates that the Pickup will not be available from the Car Club in the future. We have been offered the opportunity to purchase it. The Board discussed various options and agreed we need a suitable vehicle to carry out our work but the Car Club pickup is not ideal for our purpose and is not sufficiently robust for extensive farm work. Whilst the Board were very grateful to the car club for allowing such extensive use of the pickups over the years it was decided not to purchase the pickup but look to purchase an alternative vehicle that can handle extensive offroad work and farm work. Chris B's brother-in-law has a garage in Pembrokeshire and is an Isuzu agent. (AP63.4 Chris B to see if his brother-in-law can source a suitable vehicle such as an Isuzu in the range of £7-10k.)</p>	Chris B AP63.4
14	<p>Business Plan</p> <p>Chris K had circulated a further revised Business Plan prior to the meeting and invited comments. LW requested that an alternative word was used instead of profit if possible. CKi stated that he had previously requested meadows and sustainable land use be included in the work groups. (AP63.5 Lindsay and CKe to amend the Business Plan to include meadows and sustainable land use.)</p>	Chris K/Lindsay AP63.5
15	<p>AOB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There has been a request to use the Gas Orchard/Apple Packing Shed for a wedding reception in July. The Board agreed to the hire with normal hire rates and reiterated there is limited parking. LW confirmed that guests will be parking at the Church and walking to the orchard. The marquee will need to be repaired before it is useable. LW will speak to Deb to see if her brother would be able to repair it. (AP63.6 Arrange repair of marquee if feasible.) • It was discussed and agreed that it was not necessary to send out the complete Trustees' Annual Report and accounts or the COG Annual Report in advance of the AGM. Agenda, minutes, Treasurer's report and summary of accounts would still be circulated in advance. The brief AGM will be held at the beginning of a social celebration evening at the Ale House on 20 April 2024 on the same day as the Blossom Walk. JR gave her apologies for the AGM. • Pam has kindly agreed to take over the role of COG Membership Coordinator for the time being and will oversee this year's membership renewal process. 	Lindsay AP63.6
16	<p>Date and time of next meeting</p> <p>Wednesday 12 June 2024, 7pm in the Orchard Room was provisionally agreed.</p>	All