

Colwall Orchard Trust
55th Meeting of the Board on Wednesday 9th February 2022, 7:00 pm
By Video Call

MINUTES (FINAL)

No.	Item	Action
1	<p>Present: Lindsay Williams (Chair), Chris Blake, Clive Killick, Lisanne Llewellyn (Treasurer), Pam McCarthy, Jilly Rosser, Andrew Spray, Wendy Thompson (Secretary)</p> <p>Apologies for absence Peter Key</p>	
2a	<p>Minutes of 54th Board meeting held on 1st December 2021 The draft minutes were approved for signing.</p>	
2b	<p>Matters arising (Paper COT 54.2b) The Matters Arising report was noted by the Board.</p> <p>All matters arising from previous meetings were either complete, noted in paper 55.2b, or were discussed under other agenda items and updated in the Matters Arising and Action List at the end of these minutes.</p>	
3	<p>Board decisions by email Since the last meeting the Board had considered by email the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permission to buy items and pay a contractor to value of £3,950, to fulfil FiPL grants commitments was approved by majority on 17th January. 	
4a	<p>Produce Annual Report on Juicing (Paper COT 55.4a) PK was thanked and the report was noted by the Board.</p>	
4b	<p>Produce Annual Report on Preserves and honey (Paper COT 55.4b) WT was thanked and the report was noted by the Board.</p>	
5	<p>Recruiting lead volunteers and reducing activities to cope LW summarised the issue and invited Board views. The discussion followed the discussion at the 54th Board meeting (Minute 54.5).</p> <p>In discussion the following points were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People were delivering at their capacity, and it was important not to overload individuals. • We should cut back on big projects and focus on our traditional orchard objectives. • It was important to continue to run the weekly Friday morning sessions for many reasons including the value it brought to our volunteers. • Training was important to provide potential lead volunteers with appropriate knowledge and confidence. • CK referred to the task he had taken on to identify competencies. The responses he had received suggested to him that working more collaboratively in teams would help. He proposed that COG re-organise under functional lines of responsibility and agreed to discuss his thoughts on changes to the current structure of lead roles and coordinators with WT. 	CK

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Trustees should remain strategic and not deal with details at the Board meetings. LW proposed a Traditional Orchards Working Group and would set out what it might cover. The Board agreed that many volunteers wanted to attend practical volunteer sessions for fun and relaxation and would prefer not to take on responsibility. 	LW
6	<p>Safeguarding Policy (Paper COT 55.6)</p> <p>CK asked about using industry models to simplify keeping the policy up to date and WT explained that the draft policy was based on other organisations Safeguarding Policies (eg Worcestershire Wildlife Trust), rather than an 'industry model' which was designed for those with a focus on working with children and adults at risk, but she had looked at some examples. Her aim had been to provide a policy appropriate to the scale and type of activities COG was involved with.</p> <p>CB drew attention to the need for sensitivity and confidentiality when dealing with DBS checks.</p> <p>The Board agreed with the recommendations in paragraph 11 of the covering paper and would send any comments they had on the draft policy to WT by 20th February.</p> <p>WT agreed to take on the role of Safeguarding Officer with Lindsay Williams as the second contact.</p>	All
7	<p>Health and Safety Quarterly Report (Paper COT 55.7)</p> <p>CK was thanked for his report. He ran through the items that required action.</p> <p>The following new actions were agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To replace paper accident book with an electronic register which would be filed in an in confidence electronic file on the Shared Drive. To set up an email address safety@colwallorchardgroup.org Contractor safety responsibilities to be identified and communicated to contractors. JR suggested that stress should be identified as a risk. It was agreed that this was important and WT agreed to add it to the Organisational Risk Register. Beekeeping SWOW to be prepared. Removal of worn equipment (ongoing). H&S support for volunteers – proposal to May Board meeting. Veteran tree safety work to be undertaken as per site plan. COSHH review required. <p>CB was thanked for purchasing First Aid rucksacks to replace the plastic 'Battle Box'.</p> <p>Actions completed or rolled forward from the last meeting are recorded in the Matters Arising Action list.</p>	<p>CK WT CK</p> <p>WT</p> <p>CK CB CK LW CK</p>
8a	<p>Finance Quarterly Report (Paper COT 55.8)</p> <p>LL confirmed that the balance in the current account was £12,397.82 AT 31st January (£14,041.82 in December) and the balance in the savings account remained at £30,103.16.</p> <p>The Board noted the significant items of:</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> income from tree sales, allotment rent, grants and sales of mistletoe and preserves expenditure on trees for sale, equipment for tree planting (covered by grant), juice production, utilities and water improvements project, fencing, tools and juicing equipment (covered by grant). 	
8b	<p>Requests for approval to spend funds</p> <p>The Board approved expenditure on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website building and e-commerce functionality (£287.66) Installing a field gate at CVG (up to £500) Planting trees at the Downs School – 10 trees at c £50 each (c£500) Planning application fee for disabled toilet (£234) 	
9a	<p>Estates Working Group report (Paper COT 55.9a)</p> <p>AS was thanked and the report was noted by the Board.</p> <p>LW explained the background to applying for funding to support the capital projects referred to in the report. These were: to extend the all-weather parking and access to delivery bays; extend the apple packing shed; pond dipping platform; and fencing. He advised that COG was over-stretched to take on any of the projects other than fencing.</p> <p>WT suggested that the pond dipping platform was a relatively small and self-contained item which might be delivered in 2022/23 and that planning could be put in place to run another project in 2023/24, with her preference to provide limited all-weather hard-standing for car parking for those with mobility issues, and for deliveries.</p> <p>There were mixed views on whether this was doable. One suggestion was to design and build the pond dipping platform ourselves rather than seek a contractor to provide the quotes we'd need to apply for a FiPL grant.</p> <p>It was concluded that there was no capacity to take forward the capital projects, other than fencing.</p>	
9b	<p>Colwall Allotments (Paper COT 55.9b)</p> <p>The paper was noted and the Board confirmed that an annual report on allotment activity would suffice.</p>	
9c	<p>COG Allotment Plot Plans (Paper 55.9c)</p> <p>The Board liked the concept and agreed with the functions of the allotment plot presented by JR. LW queried the estimated total cost of £4,500. It was agreed that this seemed high. JR agreed to provide a better estimate before the Board approved the budget.</p> <p>A budget of £1,500 had been approved for the allotment plot garden (from Philly funds plus Waitrose grant) at the previous meeting in December and it was agreed that this should be put towards wrought iron work to support trees and provide entry archways.</p> <p>WT requested input into the design. She liked the plan drawn by Andy Ball which JR had discussed with him earlier in the week.</p>	JR
10	<p>Education and Training (Paper COT 55.10)</p> <p>JR was thanked and the report was noted by the Board.</p> <p>Kath Killick's offer to run a wool and felting event to be added to the plans and promises.</p>	

	LW reported that Colwall Parish Council would pay £500 for COG to provide training and run hedge surveys in Colwall. This would also be added to the list.	
11	<p>Events Planning</p> <p>LW thanked WT for her work in organising events over several years and raised the question of what next.</p> <p>WT said she was happy to provide notes and advice to future events organisers. The events early in the year were straight forward and did not take much organisation. The events that took more time were Apple Day and Wassail. H.Art would also need involvement by COG. CK reported that plans were being made and the intention was to have all the art displays inside and the catering and workshops in the marque.</p>	
12	<p>Traditional Orchards</p> <p>a. Harvestline</p> <p>JR explained the concept, which was based on a scheme run in by Orchard Link in Devon. She agreed to talk to the group and to Peter Key. WT agreed to talk to Andy Ball about how a similar scheme could be set up on the COG website.</p> <p>b. Fruit tree planting guidance (Paper COT 55.12b)</p> <p>JR noted different approaches, particularly around digging out turf and removing grass and using mulch mats to weaken grass before planting. WT confirmed that the current COG guidance (on COG website and shared drive) had been prepared by Andy Ball and was based on the Natural England Technical Information Note.</p> <p>There was agreement that some flexibility was required to adapt for the conditions, the landowner's preference and to comply with any grant conditions.</p> <p>All agreed to send suggested amendments to the guidance to JR by the end of February for her to consider whether amendments were required.</p>	<p>JR WT</p> <p>All JR</p>
13	<p>Annual General Meeting – date and proposed arrangements</p> <p>The Board agreed that the AGM should take place in the early summer with a preference for it to be outside. Wade Muggleton would be invited to be the guest speaker.</p>	WT
14	<p>Any other business</p> <p>Andrew Spray had notified the Board that he would stand down as a Trustee from the next AGM. He was thanked for all he had done both as a Trustee and regular volunteer and for his commitment to continue to take on some responsibilities for COG.</p>	
15	<p>Date and time of next meeting</p> <p>Wednesday 11th May 2022, 7:00pm</p>	WT

Matters Arising and Action list: 9th February 2022

Date	Action Ref	Detail	Target date	Who	Status @ 09-02-22
17-09-20	49.4 50.2b	Financial reserves policy – LW and LL to prepare a first draft	Feb 2022	LL	In progress
19-05-21	52.5	Non-payment of invoices – tracking system	Sept 2021	LL	Roll forward
15-09-21	53.5 55.6	System for recording H&S checks and inspections (inc equipment checks)	URGENT	CK	Roll forward
15-09-21	53.5	Lugg's Mill bridge engineers report and maintenance plan from Deb Turnbull	URGENT	CK/LW	Roll forward
15-09-21	53.5 55.5	Board competency and associated training process		CK	Under review
15-09-21	53.5 54.12	Loaning equipment policy Check insurance, liability issues	May	LW CK	Roll forward
15-09-21	53.5	H&S: Ladders Safe Ways of Working update to reflect changes to legislation	Nov	CK	Roll forward
15-09-21	53.9	Set up an COG allotment bank account	ASAP	LL	Roll forward
09-02-22	54.4	Volunteer competency and training assessment	Feb	LW	Roll forward
09-02-22	54.4	Land and building management and maintenance annual report to Board	May	AS	Roll forward
09-02-22	54.4	External influences – partnerships paper to Board	May	LW	Roll forward
09-02-22	54.5 55.5	Lead volunteers – implement actions agreed to encourage lead volunteers.	Feb	LW	Roll forward
09-02-22	55.5	Set out what a Traditional Orchards Working Group might cover.	May	LW	New
09-02-22	55.6	Safeguarding Policy Comments on draft to WT by 20 th February	Feb	All	New
09-02-22	55.7	H&S: Contractor responsibilities to be identified and communicated	URGENT May	CK	New
09-02-22	55.7	H&S: Beekeeping SWOW	May	CK	New
09-02-22	55.7	H&S: Tree safety work Lugg's Mill as per plan	2022	LW	Ongoing
09-02-22	55.7	H&S: COSHH review	2022	CK	Annual
09-02-22	55.7	H&S: Replace paper accident book with an electronic register filed in confidence on the Shared Drive.	May	CK	New
09-02-22	55.7	H&S: set up an email address safety@colwallorchardgroup.org	Mar	WT	New
09-02-22	55.7	H&S: Support for volunteers – proposal to May Board meeting.	May	CK	New
09-02-22	55.7	Add stress as a risk to ORA	May	WT	New
09-02-22	55.9c	Provide estimate of costs of creating COG allotment garden, in order to seek approved budget.	ASAP	JR	New
09-02-22	55.12a	Harvestline: Gather more information		JR/WT	New
09-02-22	55.12b	Fruit tree planting: send comments on current guidance to JR by end February	ASAP	All	New
09-02-22	55.13	AGM: arrange meeting in summer 2022	May	WT	New