

Colwall Orchard Trust
65th Meeting of the Board on Monday 14 October 2024, 7pm
Apple Packing Shed, Colwall Village Garden, WR13 6HB

MINUTES (FINAL)

No	Item	Action
1	<p>Present: Lindsay Williams (Chair), Chris Blake, Clive Killick, Pam McCarthy, Andy Pyle, Jilly Rosser, Lynne Drew (Minute Secretary).</p> <p>Apologies for absence Jenny Papettas was unable to attend.</p>	
2	<p>Minutes of 64th Board meeting held on 12 June 2024 The draft minutes were approved for signing.</p>	
3	<p>Outstanding Actions and Matters arising from previous Board meetings Action 60.7 – Toolbox talks are evolving but not currently being done. Leaders are informally discussing potential risks prior to tasks. JR stated it was useful to look at any accidents that have occurred and lessons learned. CK confirmed that this is done and procedures are changed where necessary. It was felt that the formality of toolbox talks was not workable. It was agreed to close this action and safety information can be given as tools are handed out. (AP65.1 CK and CB to produce task based information sheets to be given out with tools.)</p> <p>Action 60.8 – PM had circulated potential funding opportunities for the veranda project to the Board prior to the meeting. CK has offered to look into the veranda project in the future when time allows but it was agreed to put this action on hold for the time being.</p> <p>Action 64.4 – The Board discussed a confidential matter which has been minuted separately.</p> <p>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 COT65-3.</p> <p>There were no matters arising.</p>	<p>Clive/ Chris AP65.1</p>
5	<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 CK to renew the insurance with PIB. New fee £1,764.61. (Approved by Board 25 June 2024) Request from LW for approval for COG to contribute 20% (£4,265 at time of request) towards the cost of the equipment being requested as part of the FiPL grant (Approved by Board majority 27 June 2024) Request from LW for permission for COG to fund up to £2000 on improvements to CofE primary forest school area. To include improving drainage, removing soil compaction and reseeding the forest school area. All costs will be more than covered by the educational access grant visits from COGs Countryside Stewardship grant. (Approved by Board 11 August 2024) Request from LW to approve appointment of Andy Pyle as new treasurer trustee and increase the bookkeeping carried out by our accountant Kelly 	

	<p>Philpotts including access to our bank account so that they can pay expenditure approved by the Trustees. (Approved by Board majority 12 August 2024)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request from LW to approve contracting Lynne Drew as a self-employed administrative assistant to assist the Chair and Treasurer. She will have access to the bank account to pay expenditure approved by the Trustees. Maximum of eight hours per week expected to end March 2025. Board Secretary role will remain voluntary. (Approved by Board 23 August 2024) Request from LW to approve up to £600 funding for improvements to the storage system for the blue box in the Apple Packing Shed. (Approved by Board majority 5 September 2024) 	
5	<p>Finance</p> <p>LW welcomed Andy Pyle, who had kindly offered to take on the role of Treasurer. AP introduced himself to the Board.</p> <p>AP was co-opted to the Board as Trustee and Director.</p> <p>In lieu of a quarterly finance report, LW presented current financial figures to the Board. We are in a good position and on target to have around £90K in the bank account in March 2025.</p> <p>It was noted that we may need to increase the insurance due to the new equipment that has been purchased. (AP65.2 CK to refer to the reconciled Equipment Grant List on the shared drive, add the new items to the asset list and consider increasing insurance.)</p> <p>Karen Dean has volunteered help with bookkeeping as she has recently retired. (AP65.3 LW to introduce Karen Dean to AP to discuss offer of bookkeeping help further.)</p> <p>LW discussed the level of administration work currently and the need for ongoing administrative help. The Board was happy for the current arrangement with Lynne Drew to continue as agreed. PM commented on the need to look at all our finances to be sure that we can commit to this going forward. AP agreed that there is work to be done to assess whether we are using our administrative and bookkeeping help efficiently. PM is concerned about our costs creeping up and that we should ensure that we cover administration costs in any future grant applications. AP said he plans to look at budgets and set reserves for next year so that we will then have a budget which can be spent in line with. (AP65.4 – AP to review current administrative and bookkeeping help and look at budgets and reserves for next financial year to report to Board.)</p> <p>AP pointed out that our current online banking allows for only one user to set up and authorise payments. (AP65.5 – AP to investigate an alternative bank account which would allow for multiple authorising and report to the Board.)</p> <p>LW was thanked for covering the Treasurer position for the last few months. (AP65.6 – LW to hand over Treasurer email to AP and arrange notification of Companies House/Charity Commission.)</p>	<p>Clive AP65.2</p> <p>Andy AP65.3</p> <p>Andy AP65.4</p> <p>Andy AP65.5</p> <p>Lindsay AP65.6</p>
6	<p>Grants</p> <p>Lindsay presented his report and items for discussion.</p>	

	<p>For two years we have been invited to apply for a grant to buy hay making equipment. The deadline for making the decision was the day after the Board meeting. The DEFRA 'Capital uplift' grant is being administered by MHNL with total funds available of £38,000. The tractor will be bought privately. CK has offered use of his trailer which would form part of COG's contribution. Equipment would be stored temporarily at Brookmead. This would mean a total of £26k (with no tractor or trailer). COG would also contribute use of the Ute/Pickup and volunteer help. The equipment would also be able to be used by other (skilled) people and could be loaned to Steve Stanford. LW has talked to Colwall Youth Project regarding training young people to work with Steve on it. We would train up a team of COG volunteers wanting to do haymaking.</p> <p>The Board discussed where and how much we would use the equipment and the impact on our use of sheep and the need for tree protection.</p> <p>LW stated that this would be a good opportunity for COG. It would open up options for us and allow us to offer a local service.</p> <p>The Board agreed to go ahead with the grant application. AP noted there may be an insurance consideration if the equipment is stored on non-COG land.</p>	
7	<p>Changes to Car Park Area – Action 62.9</p> <p>LW had circulated his proposal regarding the car park area to the Board prior to the meeting and the Board discussed.</p> <p>The Board agreed to carry out groundworks at CVG to improve access and parking at a cost of £6,000.</p>	
8	<p>Events</p> <p>The planning for the Apple Day was well underway, but the weather conditions mean that parking is not possible at CVG. It was agreed that this would be strictly observed and published in advance.</p> <p>It was agreed that the Mistletoe Fair would not take place this year as there is a lack of mistletoe and no one to organise the event. The Wassail will be discussed later.</p> <p>The position of Events Co-ordinator is currently vacant.</p>	
9	<p>Projects</p> <p>It was agreed that the Board needed a separate stand-alone meeting to discuss future direction in the next couple of months. Many of our grants end in March 2025 and at the moment COG's activities are quite reactive rather than proactive.</p> <p>This meeting would give the Board a good opportunity to look at Clive's development plan and discuss matters at length. It was agreed to try to arrange a meeting before the end of the year and for it to be about three hours in length. AP would be happy to produce a suitable framework for the meeting.</p> <p>(AP65.7 – CK and AP to meet and exchange information to do prework in advance of the meeting.)</p> <p>(AP65.8 – LD to arrange a meeting date and time to suit all.)</p>	<p>Clive/ Andy AP65.7 Lynne AP65.8</p>
10	Safeguarding	

	<p>LW noted that there had been no safeguarding issues since the last meeting and there was nothing to report.</p> <p>LD confirmed that all the necessary DBS checks had been updated.</p>	
11	<p>Equipment Loan Policy – Action 63.1</p> <p>JR felt that the existing loan book procedure was not working well. LW suggested that Laurence Keil take a look at finding a sensible strategy to put in place as part of the quartermaster role. He can then liaise with JP with regard to GDPR requirements.</p> <p>(AP63.1 – LW and JP to liaise with Laurence regarding producing a workable Equipment Loan Policy)</p>	<p>Lindsay/ Jenny AP63.1</p>
11	<p>AOB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JR was thanked for her reports circulated to the Board prior to the meeting. • CB presented his report in possible pond restoration work. For the existing pond there are two options: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use contractors to carry out all or part of the work. We have had one quote from PD Hughes to date of £9,012 inclusive. Clearance £4,260. Platform £4,752. Could consider Steve on a day rate plus materials and plant. - Consider our own volunteers and split this into two projects with a target date to link in with the school summer term in April 2025. Some volunteers have already come forward and CB willing to manage this if the Board are content to move forward. Possible budget of £2,500. We are currently looking at various funding options and have tentatively approached one charity to sound them out. Jane Pountney has emailed Ernest Cook Trust. CB knows other avenues may present themselves to us for possible funding streams. <p>New Pond in Lugg's Mill</p> <p>CB exploring the option of creating a new pond in Lugg's Mill Orchard to aid biodiversity and again we have a quote from PD Hughes for a 10 x 10m pond of some £9,300. CB waiting to see if any funding is available from the Environment Agency before coming back to the Board.</p> <p>We will need to consider a Pond Management Risk Assessment prior to any works.</p> <p>(AP65.9 – CB to liaise with CK so the details of pond restoration project can be included in the development plan document.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LW noted that the Hereford Wildlife Trust had sent thanks following their visit and were very impressed with the work that COG was doing. 	<p>Chris AP65.9</p>
12	<p>Date and time of next meeting</p> <p>Monday 13 January 2025, 7pm in the Orchard Room was provisionally agreed.</p>	<p>All</p>