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Minutes of the 64th Annual General Meeting of Suffolk Wildlife Trust

Thursday 13th November 2025

SWT Carlton Marshes and by teleconference (Zoom)

The meeting commenced at 4pm and was chaired by Suffolk Wildlife Trust's Chair, Robyn Llewellyn.

Robyn Llewellyn introduced herself to members as the Chair of Suffolk Wildlife Trust's Board of Trustees. Robyn paid tribute to her predecessor Tim Woodward, reflecting he was a kind, calm and wise presence on the Board for almost five years. Tim was elected as Chair in November 2024 and died in August 2025.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from: William Kendall, Dawn Girling, Martin Howe, Sally Anfilogoff, Moira Witty, Richard Perkins.

2. Confirmation of the Minutes of the 63rd Annual General Meeting

The Chair confirmed that no one wished to propose alterations to the Minutes.
The Minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record and **APPROVED** by the meeting.

3. Annual Report of the Board of Trustees, presented by the CEO, Christine Luxton

The CEO, Christine Luxton noted that the Trust's 2030 strategy is set by the Board of Trustees, and this then determines where we focus resources and effort to maximise our impact for nature. Our 2030 Strategy, 'Bringing nature back to Suffolk' reflects the dual need to both protect the wildlife we still have and, acknowledging the loss of Suffolk's wildlife and habitats since the Trust was founded in 1961, bring back what we've lost., with two mutually supportive pillars – more space dedicated to nature and more people doing more for nature.

Christine noted the scale and pace of change we need society to commit to is unprecedented, but vital – and key to this is harnessing the power of individuals and communities to lead locally-led action for nature . She provided a series of examples of where the Trust is investing in enabling and supporting others, including the private nature reserve network, community projects including targeted action for urban species like stag beetles and swifts, and partnerships and collaborations with farmers to deliver landscape scale transformations. As part of this, we have increased our investment in training for teachers and community leaders as well as our whole school partnerships, 'Wilder Schools'.

The CEO also reflected on the Trust's role as a confident, trusted voice for nature and the strengthening of our investment in advocacy to champion a 'nature in all policies' approach ahead of the 2024 general election. With 14,000 households now members of the Trust, nature deserves to be heard. One success was the upholding of the ban on the use of neonicotinoid

pesticides on sugar beet seeds, with 30,000 people signing the national petition organised by The Wildlife Trusts.

Christine also invited Members to share a moment of hope, and a celebration of what we can achieve together, with a video of the transformation of Martlesham Wilds since its purchase in 2022, most recently the major restoration work and wetland creation funded by Biffa Award through the Landfill Communities Fund.

Christine reminded members that the Trust has also added another exciting piece to the landscape jigsaw with the purchase of Worlingham Marshes – this was thanks to grant from National Lottery Heritage Fund and the public response to the match fundraising appeal The addition of Worlingham continues a long strategic investment by the Trust, supported by many of the members, which have pieced together the Broadland landscape of the Lower Waveney.

The CEO directed Members to the summary accounts, which were presented as bar charts (and the full accounts pack which was shared on the Trust's website). These give Members an overview of how the Trust is funded - and most importantly where we invest our resources to maximise our impact for nature. The Trust's ambition to make the decade to 2030 the one in which we bring nature back underpins the decisions made by your Board of Trustees about where to focus the charity's resources.

The CEO noted the Board of Trustees is pleased to report that the Trust is in good financial health and thanked members for their support, but we are of course facing with the same economic challenges of all households and businesses, with the rise in costs.

Looking to the future, and the many challenges society will undoubtedly face, the CEO shared that the Board of Trustees is determined that Suffolk Wildlife Trust will continue to be a strong, confident and influential voice for the county's wildlife and wild places. To support this, alongside decisions about new activity and growth, there will be decisions about what to stop or do differently.

The support of Members in every community of Suffolk gives the Trust our mandate to speak up for nature and your support is more important than ever. The CEO highlighted that what the finances don't show is the magnificent volunteer effort from over individuals that sits alongside this. This year, collectively our incredible volunteers gave over 64,000 hours of time to support our work and your Board of Trustees (who are volunteers themselves) would like to offer their sincere thanks.

The CEO drew Members attention to the Gifts in Wills received this year of £1,572k. These are extraordinary gifts which we treat with respect and responsibility to use them well, with all legacies used in a considered way to maximise their impact for nature.

Christine also reported the purchase of 123 Ha (305 acres) of additional land at Arger Fen & Spouse's Vale nature reserve, which was completed in early April 2005 and so is not reflected in the bar chart summary of expenditure.

The CEO updated that the Trust's unrestricted funds, which are the savings that can be drawn on to deliver the day-to-day activities or grow impact are at £2.9 million. We also hold £4.9 million of restricted funds which are grants, donations or legacies given for a specific purpose, including the Heritage Fund grant for Worlingham Marshes and the Defra Landscape recovery projects.

This year the Board have taken the decision to draw on our unrestricted reserves to invest in the growth of our Estuary and Marine activity. This is an exciting step which we look forward to sharing more about in future years.

The CEO shared her thanks and that of the Board, to all Members and donors, for their continued support for Suffolk Wildlife Trust and our ambition for the county.

4. **<u>Ordinary resolutions:</u>**

The Chair confirmed that all members have been given postal notification of the AGM and for those unable to come to the AGM, the opportunity to participate through a proxy vote.

The Chair, Robyn Llewellyn confirmed the following statement from the auditors:

> *'In auditing the financial statements, the auditors, Peters, Elworthy & Moore (PEM), have concluded that the Trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate. They have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that individually or collectively may cast significant doubt on the Group's or the Parent Charitable Company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.'*

The Chair also noted that as a matter of good governance Charities should periodically change their auditor, to maintain effective financial scrutiny. The Trust has done this, moving to PEM in 2023 following a tendering process overseen by the Hon Treasurer and this is now the third audit they have completed.

The Chair, Robyn Llewellyn proposed the following resolutions:

i) **To approve the annual accounts of the Charity**

Proxy votes received in advance: For 114/ Against 0

The proposal was **APPROVED** at the meeting.

ii) **To approve the re-appointment of Peters, Elworthy & Moore as auditors to the Charity**

Proxy votes received in advance: For 115 / Against 1

The proposal was **APPROVED** at the meeting**.**

The Chair thanked Members and noted the next item on the agenda is the election of Trustees. Sue Hooton is retiring as a Trustee after serving six years on the Board and Robyn thanked her for her contribution and commitment to the Trust.

The Chair invited Patrick Goymer, the Chair of the Trust's Nomination Committee to lead the election of Trustees.

Patrick noted that the Trust's Articles of Association require one third of the Board to be elected by members each year. In accordance with Article 19 and Article 20 the Board of Trustees recommends three current Trustees for re-election to the Board, Patrick confirmed the Trust has fulfilled this requirement.

The Chair of Nominations Committee, Patrick Goymer proposed the following resolutions:

iii) **To re-elect Miranda Cooper as a Trustee**

Proxy votes received in advance: For 118 / Against 0

The proposal was **APPROVED** at the meeting.

iv) To re-elect Robyn Llewellyn as a Trustee

Proxy votes received in advance: For 118 / Against 0

The proposal was **APPROVED** at the meeting.

v) To re-elect Sharon Goddard as a Trustee

Proxy votes received in advance: For 119 / Against 0

The proposal was **APPROVED** at the meeting.

vi) To elect Michael Hilton as a Trustee

Proxy votes received in advance: For 117 / Against 1

The proposal was **APPROVED** at the meeting.

vii) To elect Sabine Hoefnagel as a Trustee

Proxy votes received in advance: For 117 / Against 1

The proposal was **APPROVED** at the meeting.

5. <u>Any Other Business</u>

The Chair advised that no matters had been raised by Members for consideration at the AGM.

The Chair closed the meeting and, on behalf of the Board, thanked everyone in the room and on Zoom for attending, and for their continued support for Suffolk Wildlife Trust.