

**AGM of the Bolton Conservation Volunteers held at Sweet Green Tavern
on Wednesday 8 February 2017**

Present:

Lynn Entwistle (LE) Colin Mather (CMA) Claire Billington (CBi) Colette Peachey (CP) Rick Parker (RP) Paul Crawshaw (PC) Tom Bruce (TB) Jane Arkwright (JA) Katrina Muir (KM) Justine Taylor (JT)

Officers' Reports

Treasurer CBi

CB produced a spreadsheet showing a breakdown of income and expenditure which also compared last year's accounts with the previous years. There was also a summary in the form of a written report. Our financial position remains very healthy although £357 lower than last year. Bank account balance is £14,829 but that includes the balance of lottery funding of £9,290 so group funds are actually £5,539. The main changes are:

- task income is £2,975 - similar to last year
- we have worked this last year mainly with Bolton Council, Friends of Blackleach, Woodland Trust and a couple of others. Largest receipt of £1,500 from United Utilities.
- as the AGM has changed now to February the accounts cover a longer period e.g. 2 post Christmas meals
- £400 paid out in mileage claims to volunteers
- £274 insurance cost, down on last year
- over £1,100 spent on sundry items (includes web site fees, Calendars £134, BCV mugs £160, T-shirts £313, chainsaw expenses £109 and tools & gloves £268.)
- 2 x post Christmas meals £616.

In November we received Big Lottery Funding of £10,000; thanks to Caroline & Tom for their help in this. So far 2 items have been purchased for £710 – a PC and waders; majority of money still to be spent. Last summer we celebrated the 40th Anniversary of BCV and spent £741.

Claire thanked PC for auditing the accounts, all volunteers and officers, those who cater on the resi's, and RP for his work as organiser.

All those present thanked Claire for her sterling work over the year.

Auditor PC

PC thanked CBi as the accounts were in very good order and well presented. PC inspected and checked the financial statements to make sure they are a true and fair account of the year end. Tasks down on last year but money received from UU is good but can't be relied upon in the future. Bank balance good and we should weather any problems. We have capital assets (equipment), PC, camera, tools etc. of approx. £1,000. We are in a strong position if we manage the money carefully.

Communication Officer LE

The communication systems we have in place continue to be efficient when information must be circulated. Everyone in BCV can be contacted by either text or email but contact details need to be regularly updated to remain efficient. LE circulated contact sheets and ask everyone to check and correct the information we hold.

Social Secretary LE

The social life of BCV is underpinned by rambles, residential weekends and of course the Annual Dinner, all of which are well attended and enjoyed. May I offer thanks to all those who have planned walks and outings over the past year. Of course, last year we had the much planned and discussed 40th Anniversary which was a total team effort. I am not sure many Conservation Groups will have reached such a remarkable milestone, and it is all credit due to Rick and also to all the faithful volunteers who turn out in all weather, do whatever they are asked and strive to always work to a high standard. At this stage I usually offer thanks to all those who work so hard to keep the BCV swan gliding smoothly on, but then Rick moans that I have already covered his speech in mine. Suffice to say, our teamwork is exemplary, our willingness to give up time and effort to preserve our wildlife for future generations is something of which, we should all be proud.

First Aid LE

Although we are using tools and working mostly on rough terrain, we normally only have to treat comparatively minor injuries. The kit we carry satisfies the legal requirements for an environment of light industry for approximately 30 persons and includes items specific to the problems we might encounter treating injuries in remote or muddy conditions. The contents are well within date as everything was replaced fairly recently. I planned to replace the First Aid Kit carry bag last year as it has suffered quite hard wear and tear, and failed to do it. Job for tomorrow I reckon! We have additional First Aiders in the Group which is very good and ensures that we are always likely to be covered in case of an accident. My certificate is valid until January 2018.

Website Officer CMa

Website – 2833 hits and email contacts 62. Thanks to Lynn for dealing with emails over the years. Website fees this year £50. Mr.Site is the company providing hosting & web builder tools. Overall the website is still providing value for money through publicity, recruitment of new volunteers and occasionally bringing new clients to our attention.

In January I made a few changes to the sites appearance: banner at top of page which I plan to change on a seasonal basis, and the thumbnails on each page, and repositioned and enlarged titles at top of pages. Also changed images on Home page.

Photographer

2017 is the 11th year of me being the BCV photographer, over that period I've built up a library of 9660 photos and images for BCV, which comes to 36 gigabytes of file space. The total number of photos taken is probably double that, but I tend to delete anything I'm not happy with before loading on to the computer.

As well as using my own cameras to take these photos there have been 3 group cameras: one died at Blackleach and one died at Ouzels Nest Quarry both due to water damage. The 3rd camera, which is waterproof, was bought in June 2015 using grant money and is still working well aside from a small scratch on the glass panel over the lens. The scratch has had no impact on picture quality unless pointed towards the sun, in which case it creates a nice lens flare.

The Photographer had 4 major projects in 2016:

The 40th Birthday slideshow, The 40th Birthday DVD

The 40th Anniversary Mug

And the 2017 calendar

All those seem to have been well received. At this point I would want to say thanks to Caroline for getting the calendar printed and Sheena for organising the mugs.

In 2016, as well as the projects I've just mentioned photos have been used on the website and website galleries, some have also been passed to 'Men In Sheds' for their booklet on Fred Lovell. Other than that photos have not been used for any other publicity purpose.

The number of photos used per task on the website's photo galleries as got a little out of control. There have been more tasks on the gallery using 9 or 12 photos, which means that the number of tasks staying visible on the website has fallen. Usually I try to have 6 months of task photos on the task gallery, but currently there are only 4 months. So I'm going try to keep the task gallery down to 6 photos per task with the exception of competitions, walks and residentials.

Finally I just want to bring up the 2018 calendar. The calendars so far have been created on software on my old computer as no other calendar creation software was available despite a thorough search on the internet. MS Publisher would do the job but is only available on MS Office Professional and as a standalone package, both of which are expensive. However, I have found a package called Calendar Professional 2017, it has hundreds of templates and can connect to Photoshop and Lightroom for editing. It costs about £90. I'd like to bring this, and the 2018 calendar in general to the next meeting for discussion.

Publicity Officer

This post is vacant at the moment. It was suggested that we might have a committee instead which will be discussed at a future meeting.

Tools Officer TB

TB said all tools good and in working order. Should anyone want a list he can provide one. We have 2 new pruning saws and are looking at maybe purchasing a dinghy in the future.

Fun Officer JA

JA suggested a party as we are celebrating a 40th, 50th and 60th birthday this year. Suggestions for when and where are invited. LE & TC will cater and a theme of 50's, 60's and 70's fancy dress maybe? Sheena's son would DJ. To be discussed at next meeting.

Chair RP

Thanks to everybody for their support and hard work over the year. We have a Dream Team at the moment with brilliant committed people. Our money situation is good with UU still our biggest supporter and the present work situation is good.

The only deficient area as far as RP sees is to bring 'light into dark places' – meaning to show in more detail in the public's mind what we are about. When people stop and ask us on tasks what we are doing and why – we should stop and explain in detail. We need to get people on board and communicate! This is the theme for 2017. PC suggested we may do a booklet which explains the different tasks we do and why in simple terms with pictures. RP asked for suggestions to discuss at the next meeting. RP said Tom will be taking over a lot whilst RP has op. and recovers so we must all help him as much as possible.

1. Election of Officers

<u>Post:</u>	<u>Name:</u>	<u>Proposed by:</u>	<u>Seconded by:</u>
Chair	RP	LE	TC
Vice Chair	TB	PC	RP
Photographers	CMA+ PC	TC	TB
Secretary	CP	LE	JA
Treasurer	CBi	RP	PC
Auditor	PC	TB	JA
Social/Fun	JA	LE	TB
Comms Sec	LE	RP	CP
First Aiders	LE	RP	TB
	CA		
Tools Officer	TB	RP	PC
Website Officer	CMA	TB	PC
Walks Co-ordinator	TC	RP	JA

All the appointments were unanimously accepted by those present

AGM concluded

Meeting

Minutes: Accepted as an accurate record.

1. Last task at Education Wood was very wet with a slow fire.
2. Next task is Clifton Moss continued. They want to give this a local nature reserve status so need to make a footpath all around, also crown lifting.
3. The hedge laying competition has had to be changed to 12 March (for the judge) so is swapped with Tree planting for Woodland Trust on 28 Feb.

Meeting closed at 9.20pm.

Next meeting: Wednesday 8 March 2017, 8:00 p.m. at the Sweet Green Tavern, Bolton.