

ELCV Trustees Meeting

31 March 2023

Saltire Room, John Muir House, Haddington

Present: Dick Gill (Chairman), Anne Pearson (Secretary), Peter Wells (Treasurer), Dave Wild (ELC), Anne Watson, Terry Page, Dave Quarendon (observer),

Apologies: Eric McDonald, Colin Ballantyne.

1. Welcome

Dick Gill opened the meeting at 2.15 pm and welcomed Dave Wild in his new position as Countryside Officer. Dick will circulate dates for the next meetings to all (every 2 months on the last Friday in the month).

2. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 27 January 2023

The minutes were approved as written.

3. Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting

3.1. On-line banking - Changes in the constitution are being progressed nothing to report since the previous meeting. **Action: Dick G and Peter W.**

3.2. The "Equal Opportunities Document" was finalised and adopted by the Trustees for ELCV.

3.3. For progress on projects see point 7 below.

4. Recruitment of new Trustees

Dick G circulated a draft email to send to all volunteers to recruit new Trustees since four of the current Trustees (three of them office bearers) will have to step down at the AGM in September. The content was discussed, and small amendments made. Dave W will send the final document out to all volunteers regardless of whether they are ELCV members or not. Administration as a role within ELCV will be included in the activities, to show that members who want to be less active can also be Trustees. **Action: Dick G and Dave W.**

Wider distribution of recruitment information was discussed and Dave W agreed to put something on the Rangers Facebook site. "Mud in your Eye", mentioned at the previous meeting and the ELCV website as well as face-to-face promotion with individual volunteers within the Countryside groups were also considered. Anne P and Anne W offered to do some promotion at volunteer days when possible and encouraged the others to do so. **Action: Anne P and Anne W.**

If no new Trustees come forward then the possibility of having a year of “dormancy” for the charity was considered a better prospect than disbanding the charity altogether, with the hope that some of the current Trustees would return after a year.

5. Invasive Species Control -Rootwave Pro.

As a follow-up to the last meeting (see the minutes of the meeting on 27 Jan 2023, point 3.2) Dave W reported that Rootwave Pro Technology will be having a trial of their equipment at Shore Road on 11 May at 9.30. ELCV Trustees are welcome to attend as this equipment may be something volunteers could assist in using. For more information please see <https://rootwave.com/portfolio-item/rwp-brochure>.

6. Volunteer Management Systems

Katty Baird (ex-Trustee) contacted Dave W to let him know of a new volunteer management software called “Assemble” which several large charities (e.g. RSPB) use to circulate information to volunteer groups, help managers set up and change rotas and help potential flow of information between groups. Anne W pointed out that Assemble is used by the foodbank at Tranent. There is an online demonstration of the software on 24 April lasting 1hr 30 mins for those interested. It does rely on people owning smart phones, which could be a disadvantage to some countryside volunteers. For more information see www.goassemble.com. Dave W will continue to look at the practicalities of this. **Action: Dave W**

7. Progress on projects

7.1. Anne P updated the business plan to accommodate changes to ELC countryside team contacts and will send to Dave Q to put in the secure section of the ELCV website and on the public section too. He will WhatsApp to the Trustees the code to enable Trustees to access the secure site. **Action: Anne P and Dave Q.**

7.2. Nothing to report from the Path wardens since the last meeting.

7.3. Giant Hogweed project. Dave Q reported that five new volunteers have come forward to help spot on the Tyne. James Wyllie has taken over responsibility for the Esk project from his daughter Catherine and one of their volunteers has taken over responsibility to organise volunteers in the Lower Esk.

7.4. North Berwick notice boards - an order has been placed with relevant companies for the geology interpretive board and the notice boards.

7.5. North Berwick Law marsh path - Peter W reported that a handrail has been installed with the help of Jen and Angus Currie. The next stage is to apply some hardcore to raise the level of

the path around the affected area. Overall a less extensive project than originally planned and probably no costs to ELCV.

7.6. Linkfield salt marsh 'dry' path- a site visit with some members of DCV was held on the morning of 31 March to look at the path, bridges and what might be affordable and practical. Harry Blackley and Seumus Lorimer were happy to be involved/lead in the project. The British Horse Society (BHS) represented by the regional officer Pam Dykes, has indicated that some money would be available from them towards repairs of the route.

7.7. Seafield ponds - A site visit to the Seafield pond by ELC rangers and some members of DCV was also held on the morning of 31 March to see what was practical at the site. John Hardy (DCV) was happy to be involved/lead in the project. Some more research is needed into the best way to manage the ponds and work on site is best done in the winter months. Dave W said the ELC are considering looking at the land around the ponds as well as the ponds and there is a possibility that NatureScot's Nature Restoration Fund could be considered for funding.

7.8. Levenhall floating Islands. This project has been reopened thanks to Eric M. ELCV Trustees agreed to provide £300 from funds towards materials so that one of the Men's Sheds groups can do the work.

7.9. Pencraig information boards – nothing to report since the last meeting.

7.10. Typha collection 2023. John Harrison (Aberlady) and Jen Newcombe (North Berwick Law) are happy to get involved again under the same sort of agreement as last year. Finlay Duncan (SaltyCo) is keen to work with us again. They have appointed Mike Giffin as their agricultural supply manager. He will be visiting the area 8-12th May and could meet. Dick G agreed to see if he could arrange a suitable date to meet up. Anne P will pass the information to Dick G. **Action: Anne P and Dick G.**

Money raised last year was £1660. ELCV Trustees agreed to use £824 to fund a botanical survey by Ben Averis on the marsh area at North Berwick Law. Anne P will contact Jen Newcombe to ask for a more formal project proposal as to how the money will be spent.

Action: Anne P

8. Financial report

Peter W reported that the balance at the Bank is £4,211.88. Money committed is £259 for trail cameras at Aberlady and now, during this meeting, a further £300 for the floating Island at Levenhall Links and, after further information from Jen Newcombe, ELCV also will pay for the survey of the marsh at the North Berwick Law.

9. AOB

Dave W has had a request from Chris Hoy MSP to visit a volunteer day during National Volunteer week in early June. After discussion it was decided that this could be useful publicity for the Rangers and ELCV. The best sites and those that have volunteer days in the relevant week are Aberlady and Yellowcraigs. Dave W will look into this. **Action Dave W.**

Mike Sharp has been in contact with Dave W with concerns to the core path 101 part of the route from Haddington to Athelstaneford in the Garleton Hills (potentially too 320 and 471). This seems to be a large project but one that could use volunteer assistance when plans and funds are available. Dave W is considering the Ian Findlay Fund from Paths for All. This project is at early stages.

10. Next meeting.

The next meeting will be on 26 May 2023 at 14.15-15.15 in John Muir House Haddington.

