

ELCV Trustees Meeting

26 May 2023

Block C Countryside Department, East Lothian Council Complex, 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 and introductions

After a 2.15 pm pre-meeting to discuss the way forward regarding number of Trustees allowed (15) and how to co-opt any of the prospective Trustees who would like to come on board, Dick Gill opened the meeting at 2.45 pm. He welcomed several potential new trustees to the meeting. Going round the table the trustees, those standing down and those staying introduced themselves and summarised the activities they undertook as East Lothian Countryside Volunteers living in East Lothian. Each prospective trustee introduced themselves at the meeting.

Dick Gill summarised what ELCV does pointing out that ELCV work closely with ELC which is why Dave Wild (ELC) is at the meeting. Paul Ince asked what the procedure required to become a trustee was. Dick Gill said it was a case of being co-opted until the AGM when all trustees would stand down and those standing for election or re-election would be put forward to the AGM.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 31 March 2023

The minutes were approved as written.

3. Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting

3.1 Dates for future meetings were discussed and it was agreed to keep the meeting as currently practiced (every 2 months on the last Friday in the month) for the time being.

3.2. Dave W reported that the demonstration of the volunteer management software called 'Assemble' took place at ELC. He will circulate information on Assemble to ELCV. The next step will be for him to discuss it with ELC IT and see if finance is available. It will be an ELC tool which Dave W thought would be of practical application within the ELC Volunteer sector and help bring together the groups, improve communication and allow volunteers to alter roster commitments when they needed to change them, as in pony and sheep checking. **Action:**
Dave W

3.3 ELC will host a visit of Craig Hoy if it does take place at Yellowcraig and ELCV will not need to be involved.

4. Update on projects

4.1. Path Wardens - No current requirements for tools have been requested. Battery operated hedge cutters were discussed but ELC are reluctant to use them even within the Rangers as sporadic use was thought to be a health and safety risk. Dave W w4.1. will discuss with colleagues whether with appropriate training the use of electric / long handled hedgecutters may prove a practical and safer alternative to the petrol hedgecutter that ELC no longer possess. Terry P will ask the Path Wardens for any requirements for tools again as it is some time since he has circulated a request. **Action: Dave W and Terry P.**

4.2. North Berwick notice boards - The geology interpretive board is still being completed, but the notice boards are almost ready to go in.

4.3. North Berwick Law marsh path - Nothing more to report since the last meeting.

4.5. Linkfield salt marsh 'dry' path- It was felt nothing more could be done in the project until there was a 'blueprint' as to how ELC wished to proceed in what is clearly a large engineering project. After this ELCV would be happy to help in sourcing funding in addition to what might be available from The British Horse Society (BHS) or in other ways.

4.6. Seafeld ponds - There is a possibility that NatureScot's Nature Restoration Fund could be considered for funding the project. Tara S was looking at what might be done now regarding the reed beds and what was the best time. Dave W said the ponds have two potentially conflicting interests: conservation and recreation. He felt one area could be allocated to each. Recreation activities are not currently taking place due to poor water quality. More research is needed into the best ways to manage the ponds to improve biodiversity and water quality.

4.7. Levenhall floating Islands – Eric M was not at the meeting so the report on this project will be carried over to the next meeting.

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

4.9. Typha collection 2023 - John Harrison (Aberlady) and Jen Newcombe (North Berwick Law) met Mike Griffin (SaltyCo) on 10th May and showed him both sites and how the harvest worked for them in 2022. Mike Griffin has asked what will be require from them in terms of labour and SaltyCo are happy to assist. He suggested ELC might consider finding a local contractor who could collect the bags, store undercover and load for SaltyCo. Anne P will keep in touch with John H and Jen N regarding plans. The Typha harvest, as last year, will be in September. **Action: Anne P**

4.10. North Berwick Marsh Survey – Catherine Cummings has reported Ben Averis will undertake this later in the summer as he is now fully committed to other consultancies over the spring and early summer.

5. Financial report

The balance at the bank is currently £4271 which is an increase of £60 since the last report as a result of a donation from the Pinkfoot Quiz team for an Aberlady LNR project. The commitments that we have are £259 Aberlady equipment, £834 for the plant survey and £300 for the Levenhall floating island -- a total of £1393 leaving £2878 available of which some is reserved for path warden purposes. Postscript by Dick G: the approved accounts for 2021 showed the amount reserved for path wardens was £1485 at 31/12/21. Peter W confirmed that nothing was spent in 2022 from this reserve so it remains to date.

A proposal to change the constitution to enable ELCV to use the electronic banking facilities provided by RBS was presented to the meeting (attach with Minutes) and with no dissention this will be proposed for change at the 2023 AGM.

6. AOB

Before the AGM a couple of clauses need amending regarding the number of Trustees allowed and how they are sourced/co-opted as currently these are not clear. **Action: Dick G and Terry P.**

Dick G thanked the prospective Trustees for coming and will be in touch with them in the next week. He closed the meeting at 15.50.

7. The next meeting.

The next meeting will be on 28 July 2023 at 14.15-15.15 in Haddington, the venue to be decided.