

East Lothian Countryside Volunteers Annual General meeting 2024

Date: 30th September 2024

Venue: Dirleton Village Hall

Those present:

Trustees: John Hardy (Chair), David Quarenden (Treasurer), Terry Page (Secretary), Valerie Brown, Paul Ince (membership secretary).

Members: Caroline Clyde, Robert Russel, Jeanette Demullet, Maggie Allan, Joyce Stephens, Liz Curtis, Cathrine Roberts, Nicola Goodship, Andy Coulson, Lesley Kennedy, Heather Bancroft, Ian Bancroft, Alison Smith, Morag Reeves, Rod Reeves, Eric McDonald, Andy Collins, Fiona McGibbon, Louise Hardy, Neil Clark, Dave Habgood, Ken Tippen, Mary Paterson, Harry Blackley, Mari Scott, Jane Green, Judy Wilkinson, Paul Beven, Jane Campbell,

Total membership attending, 31

ELC: Dave Wild.

Apologies for Absence: Zoe Goldstone (Trustee)

1. Opening Remarks

John Hardy (Chair) opened the meeting and thanked all those attending for making the meeting quorate. He explained that all except two of the trustees were new to the board. David Quanderon had been reappointed after a year off the board and Terry Page had been a member of the previous board.

2. Annual Report

John Hardy had given the annual report earlier in the day during the Volly Jolly that was attended by all those attending the AGM. The annual report is attached to these minutes.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Terry Page proposed acceptance of the minutes of the previous meeting and the motion was seconded by Liz Curtis. The motion was carried.

3. Treasurers Report.

Copies of the audited accounts for the calendar year 2023 were distributed. We ended the year with just over £9,000 of which £5,500 was earmarked for the Pencraig Path Improvements.

4 Election of Trustees.

The existing trustees all stood down and were proposed seconded and re-elected. In addition, Harry Blackley and Paul Beven were proposed, seconded and elected as trustees.

5. Any Other Business

Paul Ince asked what information the members would like to receive. For example, would a summary of the Trustees Meetings with a link to the web site be useful. Members indicated they would like to receive a summary of the decisions made at trustees' meetings.

Terry Page
Secretary

Chair's Annual report of ELCV Charity for year of 2024. Saturday 26th October 2024

The chair of ELCV charity, John Hardy opened by adding his welcome to all ELCV volunteers both those registered as members of the charity and all other volunteers.

We acknowledge the support of the East Lothian Council Countryside Department and **thank the staff at HQ and all of the rangers** for their knowledgeable, cheerful and helpful contribution to all volunteer activities. The appointment of only one seasonal ranger (welcome!) meant extra effort all round and well done to those volunteers who helped rangers on weekend patrols.

Our attractive County with varied coastline, The Lammermuir Hills, our farmland and industrial heritage combine to give a unique county so close to Edinburgh.

The range of Volunteer activities is impressive. **About 400 volunteers take part in so many different activities.** Sheep lookers, pony checkers, all the regular ranger led volunteer groups, plant monitoring, bird counts butterfly and bee counts help to make East Lothian a pleasant place to visit and live in.

The **Giant Hogweed project** (now in its 7th year) involves a small army of keen volunteers and landowners and particular mention should be made of James Wyllie, the organizer and Dave Quarendon, the recorder who have enabled the River Tyne valley to be free of all flowering giant hogweed plants and who are making a great effort to do the same along the River Esk. Very well done.

Our many **path wardens** are also very active passing reports to Dave Wild, the Countryside Officer, but this is co-ordinated by much hard work by Terry Page who sympathetically takes in varied styles of path report **every month**. Well done Terry, our path network is in good shape. We are not complacent, recent cold and wet conditions demand attention to many paths.

As more people move into the county (many, many houses being built), we know there are problems in the countryside but we will welcome and engage.

The more formal section of the A G M will take place at the end of the Volly Jolly today and members and non-members are encouraged to attend. The meeting will be short and sweet.

Thank you to all of you here today.

Review of Activities Oct 23 – Oct 24 East Lothian countryside Volunteers Charity

At the AGM 30th September 2023 in Gifford, 5 trustees retired and 5 more were appointed. The considerable contribution of all previous Trustees was recognised. The continuing involvement of Dave Quarendon as Treasurer, Terry Page as Secretary is appreciated and enabled continuity. Zoe Goldstone, Val Roebuck Paul Ince and John Hardy (Chair) are also trustees. Former trustee, Anne Pearson continues to advise. Thank you to all.

Trustees meet 6 times a year engaging closely with the Countryside Ranger service in order to assist with, and carry out, projects to enhance visitor experience and enjoyment. These projects are listed on the Facebook page and website www.elcv.org.uk/tasks/

External funding was obtained from collection of Typha seed heads at Aberlady NNR and N Berwick Law
Trustees approved sending of up to £824 to fund a botanical survey at North Berwick marsh

£250 funding was approved for additional wildlife monitoring equipment at Aberlady Bay

A water improvement scheme at Seafield Pond, Belhaven nr Dunbar is being scoped

Replacement of information boards at Pencraig Hill viewpoint is planned.

New noticeboards at The Glen, North Berwick have been completed.

Initial consideration was given to an access ramp at Whitesands Bay.

Volunteer spotters and landowners completed year 5 of the Giant Hogweed eradication programme along the River Tyne: the scope of the project has been extended to include the River Esk. More details at www.elcv.org.uk/hogweed

Fencing of the pathway from East Linton station (due to be reopened) to Pencraig Hill is being investigated.