

**Minutes of Gifford Community Land Company AGM  
held on Sunday 28th August in the Gifford Community Woodland**

Present: Roo Hardy (Chair), Ian Watson (Treasurer), Serena Thursz (Trustee), Roger Wilson (Trustee), Adam White (Trustee), Graeme Davies (Trustee), Nev Kilkenny (Project Manager), Jill Hyslop (Admin), plus 40 members of the community

**1. Welcome**

Roo welcomed everyone to the AGM.

**2. Apologies**

John Wrinn (Trustee), Mhairead Monelle (Trustee), Rosemary Everett (Comms Team), Gordon

**3. Chair's Report**

Roo thanked the community for all their work in keeping the community woodland safe, healthy and available for people to enjoy. She reminded people about the background to the 5-year anniversary event, which had been suggested by members of the community. The activities represented 5 of the biggest successes achieved during the past 5 years: (1) the creation of the accessible paths, allowing the community to use the woods for things like today's Forest Church; (2) providing volunteering opportunities for the community; (3) embedding forest school sessions into the curriculum at Yester Primary School; (4) understanding the natural produce of the woods and using it sustainably to generate income; and (5) clearing invasive rhododendron and turning it into charcoal, demonstrated by the charcoal art. Roo thanked all the event partners, volunteers, trustees, the woods project team and the comms teams for all their work in delivering the event.

Roo acknowledged the impact of Storm Arwen, which had resulted in the loss of trees in Fawn Wood, and went on to say that Ash-die back is now badly affecting the woods. The woodland management plan will be updated to detail what work is required and there will be a special community meeting scheduled so that plans can be shared and discussed with the community.

Finally, Roo offered a very big thank you to everyone who supports the woods.

**4. Finance Report**

Ian was pleased to report that the finances were in good shape, with the bank balance sitting at just under £19K, and acknowledged the work done by his predecessor Kevin Hague. He informed the meeting about the charitable funding we are currently receiving from the Co-op Community Fund, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and Fallago Rig Wind Farm Community Fund. The HLF grant period started in Spring 2001 and runs until Spring 2024. Ian emphasised the need to complete projects during this funding period, otherwise the money will not be released. He encouraged people to come forward with ideas. He also reminded people that we need to generate our own income, and asked potential volunteers to come forward to help with delivering events. The final Co-op Community Fund payment will be made in Autumn. Ian circulated the financials, showing actual v. planned income and expenditure.

## **5. Election of Trustees and Office Bearers**

Roo proposed amending the constitution to remove the need to rotate a third of the trustees at each AGM. The current system of rotation prevents some trustees from serving a full term. It was proposed that all trustees should have the option to serve 2 consecutive 3-year terms before being asked to step down. Roo asked those present to vote on this amendment with a show of hands, and there was a clear majority in support of the amendment.

John Wrinn has given notice that he will be stepping down as a Trustee, so there is a vacancy for a new Trustee. Roo thanked John for all his hard work.

Roger Wilson and Mhairead Monelle were both appointed to serve a 2nd term. This was seconded by Roo and approved by those present with a show of hands.

Roo reported that Roger was developing a recruitment process for the appointment of new trustees and encouraged anyone interested in the current vacancy to speak to Roger.

## **6. AOB**

Roo confirmed that the date of the next Open Woods Meeting will be Monday 28th November. She also reminded people about the importance of the 'Friends of Gifford Woods' scheme, which generates crucial income for the woodlands. She encouraged those present to speak to Graeme and Adam about different ways of becoming a Friend, with online and paper options available.

Roo invited people to add a tag to the 'wishing tree' outside the marquee, detailing either something they love about the woods or something they would like to see added to the woods.

Roo closed the AGM by thanking everyone for their time and continued interest in the woods, and invited everyone to enjoy the delicious food and drink being served by Buck & Birch.