



Quantock Eco

**Minutes of the Quantock Eco AGM held on Friday 21st April 2017
at 7.00pm at Crowcombe Church House, Crowcombe.**

1. Welcome

Quantock Eco's Chairman, Philip Comer, welcomed all those present and thanked them for their continuing support.

2. Apologies were received from Judith & Peter Greig, Cerys & Graham Randell, Rob Salmon, Kees and Mary ter Braak and Paul Partington (arrived for the talk).

3. Minutes of 2016 AGM

The Chairman noted that the minutes for the 2016 AGM had been published on our web page and would be taken as read. There were no comments or matters arising. The Chairman signed the 2016 minutes as a true record.

4. Chairman's Report

The main role of Quantock Eco is to help raise awareness about environmental and sustainability issues with those who live or work in and around the Quantocks. We do this by holding events, by being present at local events, such as the Nether Stowey May Fair (in April again a week on Saturday) and the Bicknoller Flower Show, and by networking with other organisations.

Quantock Eco has been active in participating in groups such as the Quantock Hills Joint Advisory Committee and the Hinkley Point Community Forum. We also continue to network with other like-minded groups such as the Wivey Action on Climate, Minehead and Alcombe and Taunton Transition groups, Forum 21, and Friends of Quantock.

We relaunched our Newsletter a year ago, and this been published once a Quarter since then. Many thanks to Julian Anderson for initiating this and for doing an excellent job as the editor.

A year ago, following the 2016 AGM we held a debate on the possible Environmental consequences of the United Kingdom leaving the European Union. It is hard to believe that is only a year ago. Now Article 50 has been triggered and we are starting the process of negotiation. The potential impacts on environmental programs and the countryside remains very uncertain.

At the Bicknoller Flower Show in July last year, QE arranged with the local Nissan dealer to have their top selling all electric car, the LEAF, on show. This proved to be of interest to a good number of people and was good profiling for QE.

In September we held our second Apple Pressing day in Bicknoller. As with the previous year we had a good day and set up two apple presses. Lots of people brought apples and we were busy pressing fruit and bottling the juice for most of the day. A popular and successful day. Many thanks to Kate and Andrew Harrison for helping to make it such a success.

In December we arranged for a guided walk on the reserve at Steart Marshes. The walk was led by local ranger and long term QE member Roy Osborne. The recently created reserve acts as both part of the flood defence system and provides roosting sites for thousands of seabirds. 15 QE members had an interesting morning, though we were not too lucky with the birds we saw. Thank you Roy for making it possible.

Fracking: A year ago QE published a leaflet to inform members about the issue of Fracking, following the granting of Petroleum Exploration and Development Licences along a part of the north Somerset Coast. The leaflet was intended to be neutral and present some of the key facts relating to this issue. The Chairman noted that the issue continued to be in the public eye and that a number of meetings on the issue had been held. Friends of Quantock have a talk on the “Facts and Fiction of Fracking” in September. QE would continue to keep a watching brief, and would follow up if there were any significant developments such as an application to drill a test well.

Membership

We have a total of 161 people on our “Members list”, but of these only 48 were paid up in 2016 (63 in 2015). 31 pay by Standing Order, which is a great help.

QE Projects

The Bishop’s Lydeard to Taunton Cyclepath: QE have long supported the campaign for a cycle path between Bishop’s Lydeard, Cotford St Luke and Taunton, and helped establish a Cycle Path Group which was set up as a separate entity. After a period of little activity, QE helped initiate a meeting of the Cycle Path Group in March this year to agree how to re-energise the project. At the meeting it was agreed that the Cycle Path Group should take the initiative to meet with the landowners and it was planned that this will be completed by the end of April. However, this target is now unlikely to be achieved.

The Stowey Millenium/Jubilee Wood Project: this project is now mature and requires less effort. The trees are doing well under the watchful eyes of Roy Osborne and Richard Ince.

InQEdible Edible (QEIE) initiative: QEIE has been less active this year and we have not been able to grow produce ourselves, due in part to lack of new volunteers to take it on. The core team continue to look for surplus produce which is delivered to Children’s Services in Williton most weeks and delivered together with food boxes from the Food Cupboard. The fresh produce is really needed and the efforts of the team much appreciated; contributions of surplus produce from anyone is always welcome.

West Somerset Community Land Trust (WSCLT): The WSCLT was launched at a public meeting on Tuesday 1st November 2016 at the Beach Hotel, Minehead. Quantock Eco is a founding member of the Trust and is pleased to support this very worthwhile and important initiative. QE is represented on the Board by David Croxton. The Trust is run entirely by local volunteers and plans to build eco sustainable homes; homes that will be retained by the community on a permanent basis and offered at rents that are truly affordable, rather than the 80% of market value defined by the Government.

As I indicated last year, after two years in post I am stepping down as Chairman of Quantock Eco to focus on other activities. I will continue to support the organisation and wish the new Chairman and the organisation well. Finally I would like to say a big thank you to everyone on the Executive Committee; it has been good working with you to help keep the spirit of Quantock Eco alive.

5. Treasurer’s report

The Treasurer clarified the summary of Accounts, that had been signed off as a true record of our year’s financial activity. £250 in subscriptions were received during the period April 2016 to March 2017, representing 50 Members. We had a Donations of £71 and raised £55 at Events, including visitors to last year’s AGM, a raffle at Nether Stowey Fair and lunches sold at the Apple Day. Other income included £94.50 commission from Utilities Warehouse. Our total income was £470.50, down from £656.01 in 2016.

On the expenditure side, we paid £137.17 for Events and Hall Hire and £123 for maintenance of our web site. Total expenditure was £260.15.

Overall we had an excess of £210.35 of income over expenditure, (down from £303.01 in 2016) giving us a closing balance of £1823.26. A signed copy of the summary and the full

accounts sheets are available for examination. Many thanks to Clive Raisey for scrutinising the books.

6. Adoption of the accounts for Year ending 31st March 2017. There were no questions to the Treasurer, and Ian Myers proposed that the Accounts be accepted, seconded by Stuart Dowding and this was passed unanimously.

7. Clive Raisey was re-appointed as auditor for the next year. The meeting approved a gift of up to £20 to be presented to Clive for his help and guidance.

8. Election of the Chairman. Philip Comer stood down as Chairman. **David Croxton** indicated his willingness to stand as Chairman and was proposed by Julian Anderson and seconded by Kate Harrison. He was duly elected unanimously.

9. Election of Committee. All current members agreed to stand again. Proposed by Roy Osborne and seconded by Kate Harrison: Jill Canney, Ian Myers, Philip Comer, David Croxton, Carole Darke, Stuart Dowding, Pam Salmon and Chris Leigh-Browne were voted in en bloc, and approved unanimously. No further volunteers came forward, to stand for committee.

10. Any Other Business.

Jill Goodwin advised the “The Truth Behind a Dash for Gas”; a film about fracking will be screened by Frack Free EQS in Nether Stowey Village Hall on Friday 12th May.

Stuart Dowding reminded the meeting that the next meeting of the Quantock Hills Joint Advisory Committee was on Tuesday 25th April at Enmore Village Hall.

Ian Myers mentioned a meeting arranged by Forum 21 in Stogumber on 27th April to consider “After Brexit & Trump: what about the Environment?”

Vernon Hughes raised a question about QE’s position regarding the Anaerobic Digester plant at Cannington. This plant was set up to take food waste, but is now operating mainly on crops grown for the purpose (ie. not waste). It has been become a sensitive local issue due mainly to the number of vehicle movements along small country roads. After some discussion, **David Croxton** said that, as the new Chairman, he would be directed by the wishes of the membership and if there was a strong mandate in support QE taking a position, then he and the Executive Committee would respond accordingly. This would be discussed at the next Executive Committee meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7.45p.m. Refreshments were served, including a free glass of wine. This was followed by a very informative talk by Steve Read, the Managing Director of Somerset Waste Partnership.

This is a true record of the QE AGM 2017

Signed.....Chairman

Date:

QE Members attending the 2017 AGM

Julian Anderson
Jill Canney
Glen Clark
Philip Comer
David Croxton
Lucy Croxton
Carole Darke
Stuart Dowding
Jill Goodwin
Andrew Harrison

Kate Harrison
Vernon Hughes
Laetitia Kelly
Chris Leigh-Browne
Andy Lyne
Ian Myers
Roy Osborne
Pamela Salmon
Jane Warmington
Hugh Warmington

In addition, Dan Clark, John Holden and Paul Partington were present for the talk.