

**Minutes of the 147th Annual General Meeting
of the Hertfordshire Natural History Society
held at Affinity Water, Hatfield at 4pm
on Saturday 1 October 2022**

1: Welcome: HNHS Chair, Peter Tallantire welcomed 45 members to the AGM which was the first to be held 'face to face' since 2019, four months before Covid restrictions were introduced.

2: Apologies: Haydon Bailey, Bruce and Sally Bennett, Astrid Biddle, Ian Carle, Michael Clark, Ian Denholm, Richard Dyster, Judy England, Dan Fletcher (Treasurer), Alan and Janet Gardiner, Martin Ketcher, Brenda Harold, Ian Holt, Lorraine Lui, Tricia Moxey, David Neal, Amanda Proud, Christine Shepperson, Clifford Smout, George Stodulski.

3: Minutes of the 146th AGM held on 27 November 2021 were agreed as a correct record.
Proposer: Agneta Burton. Seconder: Chris James.

4: Matters Arising: none.

5: Report of the Management Committee for 2021/22: Copies of were available at the meeting and subsequently published in the 2022 *Hertfordshire Naturalist*. Peter Tallantire highlighted the following points:

- Covid-19 restrictions had inhibited some survey activities and led to some events being cancelled. The Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust had decided that the Festival of Wildlife, formerly held at Panshanger Park in association with HNHS, would no longer take place. After Government restrictions were lifted in spring 2022, HNHS ceased publishing website advice on safe outdoor behaviour. Recently, new advice on safety in relation to an outbreak of avian flu had been published.
- The 2021 AGM and March 2022 Bird Conference took place online. The Gerald Salisbury Lecture, jointly organised with Welwyn Natural History Society, was given online by chalk landscape expert Dr Haydon Bailey.
- The Mammal, Amphibian and Reptile Atlas survey (Herts MARA) was extended into 2022 because of Covid. Between 2015 and January 2022 it accumulated more than 4,000 records. Spring 2022 brought the launch of the postponed Hertfordshire Dragonfly Survey.
- Despite more than 20 years work by Bird Club members to conserve Hertfordshire's last Tree Sparrows at Tyttenhanger, there had been few winter records and none since April 2022. Monitoring was continuing, but survival chances for this last colony in the Southeast were slim. Plans to build 6,000 new homes on part of their nesting site, which had led to intensified conservation efforts, had been temporarily withdrawn by Hertsmere Borough Council. Thanks went to Rupert Evershed and Bird club colleagues for all their efforts to keep Tree Sparrows as a Hertfordshire breeding species.
- Judy England, editor of the *Hertfordshire Naturalist*, and Clifford Smout, editor of the *Herts Bird Report*, were thanked with their editorial teams for excellent work. Special thanks were due to Jack Fearnside for designing both journals in a voluntary capacity. Judy was moving away from Hertfordshire, but Stuart Warrington had kindly agreed to succeed her.
- HNHS membership remained high with around 500 members. The Society sadly recorded the death in the past year of David Leigh. In spring 2022 the Society had subscribed to

specialist 'Member MOJO' software for organizing membership records. This enabled members to pay via the website. Martin Ketcher was thanked for overseeing the transition.

- Thanks were offered to all management committee members for their hard work. The Treasurer, Dan Fletcher, would be moving away from Hertfordshire this winter, but had offered to remain in post for the coming year. Thanks were due to Alan Gardiner, who had left the committee for family reasons, but was continuing his valued work as county Bird Recorder.

The Management Committee report was approved. *Proposer: Stuart Warrington. Seconder: Peter Delaloye.*

6: Annual Accounts for 2021/22: Dan Fletcher, the Treasurer, presented his accounts via a video recording. The accounts had been previously circulated to members and were available at the meeting. The Society held total funds of £107,777 at the start of April 2022 compared with £100,202 the previous year. This comprised £52,068 in accessible funds and £55,709 in longer-term investments. Receipts for the year had totalled £12,043 and payments £8,210. He highlighted a noticeable decline in subscription income in early 2022 compared with the previous year. This was being investigated but could partly relate to the closure in November 2021 of Virgin Money Giving, which some members previously used for payments.

The accounts were unanimously adopted. *Proposer: Ronni Edmonds-Brown. Seconder: Chris James.*

7: Election of Officers and members of the Management Committee for 2022/23: The following officers and members were elected: Chair, Peter Tallantire; Secretary, David Utting; Treasurer, Dan Fletcher. Members: Agneta Burton, Ian Carle, Ronni Edmonds-Brown, Rupert Evershed, Jack Fearnside, Chantal Helm, Tim Hill, Martin Ketcher, Christine James, Alex Waechter

Peter Tallantire, David Utting, Dan Fletcher, Agneta Burton, Ronni Edmonds-Brown, Rupert Evershed, Ian Carle, Tim Hill, Chantal Helm, Christine James, Martin Ketcher and Alex Waechter would also serve as the charity's Trustees. *Proposer: Edward Darling. Seconder: Roy Woodward.*

8: Other business – none

The meeting closed at 4.21pm.

David Utting
HNHS Secretary