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| **Barnsley Naturalist and Scientific Society**  **Annual General Meeting**  **January 24th 2024**  **Worsbrough Common Community Centre** | **C:\Users\Colin\Pictures\Downloads\NATs_new_LOGO_02 a wider canvas.jpg** |

**Present**: Doug Brown, Ricki Bull, Alan Crossland, Jill Hayler, Philip Jay, Gordon Maddan, Ron Marshall, Annefie Roberts, Peter Roberts, Chris Tomson, Michele Winder. **Apologies:** Catherine Artindale, Mark Dudley, Juliet Maddan, Trevor Mayne. A number of further apologies were received after the meeting.

**Welcome**: Doug Brown welcomed those who were present. He thanked Alan Crossland and Geoff Jackson, who had stood down from the committee, for their many years of service to the society, including Alan’s time as our representative on the Local Access Forum and Geoff’s work on records.

**Reports on previous year.** Peter Roberts introduced reports on the previous year.

**Programme**. Annefie Roberts gave an overview of the previous year’s activities, illustrated by images of field visits in all weathers and in a range of locations. Field visits take place throughout the year on the second Saturday morning of each month, and on Wednesday evenings during the summer months. There are extra day excursions too, some organised by other organisations like the Yorkshire Naturalists’ Union. Most of the 18 field visits were well-attended.

The current pattern is for six indoor meetings from October until March on Wednesday evenings. The main difference during the year was a change of venue for indoor meetings. Barnsley Town Hall unfortunately is no longer open beyond 8pm in the evenings. We therefore opted to have our evening indoor meetings from October 2023 at Worsbrough Common Community Centre since an earlier start would be difficult for some speakers and members who may be working away. This ended a period of almost 75 years being accommodated by Barnsley Council in the Civic Hall, Central Library and, since 2014, Barnsley Town Hall.

The programme to September 2024 has been published. Annefie Roberts commented that she has now been programme secretary for over 15 years and would like someone else to take on the role. She was happy to support someone for a while. In the absence of anyone wishing to step into the role, she proposed having a one-off meeting of interested people who would generate ideas for the programme. It was agreed to arrange this.

**Records.** Michele Winder reported on the numbers of records from Barnsley Nats field visits and from individuals, sent to the Barnsley Biological Records Centre. Michele encouraged everyone to send in records. We discussed ways to identify 1km squares and sites that would benefit from more records.

**Financial Position and Subscription.** Ron Marshall presented a report on the society's financial position. The balance at the last AGM in January 2023 was £2,274 and this year (2024) is £2,205, with net expenditure of £69. The number of paid-up members at the AGM was 21. In previous years the level of income from subscriptions and contributions covered the expenditure. The new room hire costs of £180 led to a short fall of £69, which came from our reserves. This is less than it could have been because speaker expenses were lower than previous years with some talks given freely by members and others.

For 2024 the committee has agreed to keep the subscription at £10 per person and use our reserves as necessary. However, the reserves are generally held to cover unforeseen costs: for example, replacing our equipment\* and to help if our regular annual costs increase ‘in year’. Following views being expressed on the different options, it was agreed that the subscription would increase to £15 for 2025, with subscriptions being collected from October 2024 for the following year.

*\*Subsequent to the meeting the laptop computer used for our meetings stopped working and is not* *worth* *repairing. It will have to be replaced using our reserve funding.*

**The Committee.** Some committee members and officers who had been on the committee for several years would be pleased to stand down if others were willing to replace them. As stated previously, Alan Crossland and Geoff Jackson have stood down from the committee. Michele Winder has increasingly helped with online information and has taken on the responsibility for records.

At this time no one had come forward to be on the committee. The committee was therefore elected as: President: Doug Brown, Vice President and General Secretary: Peter Roberts, Treasurer: Ron Marshall, Programme Secretary: Annefie Roberts, Record Secretary: Michele Winder, Committee Members, Linda Graham, Phillip Jay. There remain two vacancies.

**Links with other organisations.**

* Peter Roberts and Doug Brown are contacts for Yorkshire Naturalists’ Union (YNU). As an affiliated society we receive their journal ‘The Naturalist’, annual bird and butterfly/moth reports for Yorkshire, and in addition Barnsley Nats members can participate in their activities. A YNU conference is taking place on March 9 and online talks are available. We need to publicise YNU activities and make the publications available to our members.
* Michele Winder is the Barnsley Nats representative on the Barnsley Biological Record Centre steering group, contributing to decisions on what records are required, on sites and areas needing extra recording effort, and on how the BBRC is run.
* Peter Roberts is the contact for the Barnsley Biodiversity Trust: Barnsley Nats helps with the Biodiversity Action Plan, in providing evidence of progress and in promoting biodiversity.
* Linda Graham is the Barnsley Nats representative on the Barnsley Local Wildlife Sites Panel with Doug Brown as a substitute. The Panel makes decisions on the designation of Local Wildlife Sites and monitors and promotes their positive conservation management. Some LWS have been designated SSSIs by Natural England with a higher statutory level of protection.
* Philip Jay represents Barnsley Nats on the Barnsley Local Access Forum which looks at footpaths, rights of way and access to the countryside.

**Discussion.**

The email sent out about the AGM asked members for their involvement: ‘*the society can only continue if members support it*!’

* Are you willing to lead a field visit? Or make notes of what we see on a field visit?
* Can you suggest a speaker or a topic for a talk or id session?
* Would you be willing to help plan the future programme of field visits or indoor meetings?
* Are you interested in taking on some administrative jobs?

There had been one or two offers received to lead a field visit and give a talk. At the AGM there was some discussion and further suggestions made. Included were linking field visits to areas that needed more records, inviting members to help with surveys on the TPT near Thurgoland, and giving members access to ID training sessions. There were also specific suggestions for talks and field visits. These can be followed up in the ‘ideas session’ meeting suggested by Annefie.

Doug ended the evening by thanking committee members for all they do for the society and thanking everyone there for their attendance and participation.

Peter Roberts

Secretary