

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE BOARD

9 November 2006 at 7 p.m.

The Committee Room, The Council House, Malvern

Present:- Mrs. S. Adeney, Mr. M. Cordey, Mr. R. Hall-Jones, Mr. A. Macmillan, Mr. D. Masters, Mr. A. Myatt, Mr. B. Pilcher, Mr. A. J. Phillips, Mr. J. Plant, Mrs. P. Raven, Mr. R. Roberts, Mr. C. Rouse, Mr. P. Rumney, Dr. B. Smith, Mr. R. Stockton, Mrs. S. Thetford, Mr. R. Thomas, Mr. J. Tretheway (Chairman), Mr. J. Webb, Mr. B. Wilcock, Mr. R. Witcomb.

In attendance:- The Director, Administrative Officer, Conservation Officer.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE. Mr. P. Harling, Mr. J. Mills, Prof. J. Raine, Mr. S. Try, Mr. W. Watts, Mrs. J. Wildin.

2. ANNUAL REPORT OF CHAIRMAN FOR THE PREVIOUS YEAR. Dr. Smith gave his report as follows:-

“This report describes what has been achieved during the past year. It is a healthy list of achievements which reflect the hard work put in by staff and Conservators. I do not intend to comment further on these specific issues other than to say that I am extremely grateful for all this hard work.

“For a number of reasons I believe it will be useful if this year I focused my comments on the future of the Conservators rather than on the past.

“Firstly the end of my own three-year spell as Chairman is clearly an opportunity to take a longer-term, more contemplative overview of the direction in which the Conservators are moving.

“Secondly our external environment has certainly taken a steep change this year. The disappearance of the two government agencies with which we have had most contact, namely English Nature and the Countryside Agency, and their replacement by the new Natural England is likely to have a significant impact on us. The same Act which effected this change also potentially changes the future management of Common Land – history alone will tell whether or not this change is radical. Closer to home the Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), the partnership wherein we work with national and local government agencies, has been significantly re-activated this year. This clearly has potential benefits for us, but we need to prepare ourselves if we are to capitalise on them.

“Finally several of our own internal issues have clearly reached a watershed. We have a new Conservation Officer at a time when our own Management Plan is due to be updated. We have effectively completed our five-year plan for improving car parking on and around the Hills. The funding of our grazing projects, aimed at restoring grassland quality and halting the spread of scrub, is hopefully on the verge of moving from temporary and insecure to secure in the medium term. Things therefore are unlikely to continue as they have done over the last few years.

“Recognising that it was now perhaps appropriate to take stock of their overall situation the Conservators decided to try to prioritise their future aspirations. This led to the publication of our first Forward Strategy and the subsequent public consultation about this strategy (a process of which has itself proved useful in re-building connectivity with a whole lot of organisations and individuals). Embedded within this strategy is a considerable amount of deliberation about the balance between the Conservators’ two principal obligations. These

are, on the one hand, the obligation to conserve their lands and the biodiversity thereon for the future and on the other hand the obligation to provide not only public access but also facilities for public enjoyment. Arguably this strategy moves the balance a tiny bit in the direction of providing facilities for public enjoyment and also just starts to address the difficult question of how to exploit the potential of the Hills to bring economic advantage to the area.

“The process of addressing the forward strategy has been informative about our own internal workings. Any organisation which is dedicated primarily to conservation ought to be constituted such that it is liable to be relatively constant in its approach. The Conservators’ constitution, based on Acts which define a multitude of things we cannot do and specify that we are controlled by, in managerial terms, a ridiculously high number of Board members (Conservators) does indeed guarantee a fair amount of constancy. The positive side of these restraints was clearly seen when addressing the aforementioned balance between conservation and public enjoyment. Here they allowed for a marginal adjustment in the Conservators’ future approach but prevented more radical changes which otherwise might have caused long-term damage and lost us widespread public support.

“On the other hand we are now dealing with a rapidly changing external environment where we need to be quick on our feet to cope with the threats and opportunities that may arise. A tendency towards caution and constancy can undoubtedly be a disadvantage in these circumstances, as I believe we have seen on several occasions during the past year or so. One seldom gets criticised for missing opportunities but one ends up the poorer nevertheless.

“I therefore believe that the main lesson to take from the last few years is that we Conservators will have to find ways of moving, changing and acting more quickly and decisively when necessary within the constraints of an apparently antiquated and restrictive, but nevertheless still appropriate, constitution. The answer surely is to be clear not only on what we really do have to preserve at all costs but also to decide where we can afford to be more flexible. In short we will have to look at the fundamentals and prioritise between them. As we have discovered in addressing our future strategy (which after all is only just a start along this track) this is not going to be easy.

“Before signing off I would like to emphasise how much I have enjoyed being Chairman of the Malvern Hills Conservators and to thank all those who have helped me so much during this period. I wish my successor, John Tretheway, every success.”

The Chairman drew attention to all that Dr. Smith had done for the Board during his term as Chairman and on behalf of members expressed appreciation for his leadership and the way he had conducted the business of the organisation. These comments were **ENDORSED** by the Board.

3. COMMITTEE STRUCTURE FOR 2007. It was **AGREED** on the proposal of Mrs. Thetford, seconded by Mr. Pilcher, to accept the recommendation that the Board adopted a two committee structure. Whilst appreciating the amount of staff time in servicing the committees and the fact that only a few members had given Access and Information as their first choice, it was regretted that the visitor services work of the Board would not have its own committee, as well as reducing the opportunity for two more Conservators to obtain wider experience of the Board by chairing committees. With regard to setting up a working party to deal with strategic issues, it was **AGREED** that for urgent matters, the Director in the first instance referred them to the Urgent Business Sub-Committee.

4. MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES FOR THE YEAR TO 31 OCTOBER 2007.

Land Management

Adeney, Mrs S
Phillips, A
Pilcher, B
Plant, J
Roberts, R (ex-officio)
Rouse, C
Stockton, R
Thetford, Mrs S
Thomas, R
Tretheway, J (ex-officio)
Watts, W
Webb, J
Witcomb, R

Administration & Resources

Angell, M
Cordey, M
Hall-Jones, R
Harling, P
Macmillan, A
Mills, J
Myatt, A
Raine, J
Roberts, R (ex-officio)
Rumney, P
Smith, B
Tretheway, J (ex-officio)
Wilcock, B

Five members did not wish to serve on any committee.

5. ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO SERVE ON OUTSIDE BODIES FOR THE YEAR TO 31 OCTOBER 2007.

5.1 Malvern Hills AONB Joint Advisory Committee. **ELECTED** - Dr. Smith.

5.2 Malvern Spa Association. **ELECTED** - Mr. Roberts.

5.3 Great Malvern Town Centre Partnership. **ELECTED** - Mr. Roberts.

6. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

6.1 Mr. Tretheway thanked members for their confidence in electing him as Chairman and reiterated that he was interested in good news emanating from an organisation which had conserved this nationally important landscape since 1884. He invited members to join him on a Sunday morning walk each week covering different areas of MHC land.

6.2 Mr. J. McArthur. The Chairman read a letter from Mr. McArthur stating that, with regret, he was having to resign as Voluntary Warden after 17 years service. The Chairman stated that on behalf of members he would be writing to Mr. McArthur thanking him for all his work over the years and in particular his significant input into the naming of Millennium Hill.

6.3 Old Hills Car Park. The Chairman advised that he had attended the opening of the car park on Sunday, 29 October and reported that despite the earlier problems it was now looking good. Local member, Mr. Cordey, stated that it was much appreciated by local people as it would take traffic off a dangerous corner of the highway. The Director agreed to look into landscaping.

6.4 Malvern Outdoor Centre. The Chairman advised that he had written to Worcestershire County Council expressing concerns at the possible closure of the Centre.

7. PUBLIC QUESTIONS.

7.1 Mr. R. Dawe. Mr. Dawe asked two questions:-

(a) Did the Chairman and his fellow Board members now accept Mr. Dawe as official spokesman for the commoners with common rights on the commons in the parish of Castlemorton as per list of names previously sent?

(b) Did the Chairman and his fellow Board members intend to continue to "waste" the public's money like the past chairman did in his term in the public office in an irresponsible manner?

In answer the Chairman stated that it was accepted that Mr. Dawe had common rights but the Board had resolved in July 2005 that it did not recognise the Hollybed Commoners Association. This decision had been reached because the Association did not have regular meetings, or an AGM to democratically elect officers. Furthermore it would not be in the interests of the common to have two associations in one common land unit. With regard to question (b) the Chairman advised that the Board would continue to uphold its Byelaws.

7.2 Mr. C. Eden. Mr. Eden asked if the Conservators had considered all the implications for the town and its surrounding countryside and for their own constitutional remit of the proposed transfer of their land to the Town Council to be developed as allotments?

The Chairman invited Mr. Eden to remain for the rest of the meeting to hear the matter discussed under Agenda item 11.2.

8. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

Mr. Rouse declared a personal interest in item 11.3.13

Mr. Macmillan declared a personal interest in item 11.2 as a Town Councillor

Mr. Hall-Jones declared a personal interest in item 11.2 as a Town Councillor

9. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES. It was **AGREED** that the Minutes of the meeting held on the 14 September 2006 should be **CONFIRMED** and **SIGNED** as a true and correct record. Mrs. Raven gave her apologies for non-attendance at that meeting.

10. MATTERS ARISING. None.

11. COMMITTEE REPORTS.

11.1 Access & Information. Mr. Roberts presented the following report of the meeting held on the 19 October 2006. This was seconded by Mr. Wilcock and **CARRIED**.

ACCESS & INFORMATION COMMITTEE

Thursday, 19 October 2006 at 2 p.m.

Present:- Mrs. S. Adeney, Mr. J. R. Mills, Mr. R. Roberts (Chairman), Mr. R. Thomas, Mr. J. Tretheway.

In attendance:- The Director, Administrative Officer, Mr. B. Pilcher, Mr. B. Wilcock.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE. Dr. B. Smith, Mr. W. Watts, Mrs. J. Wildin.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST. None.

3. SITE VISIT TO THE LAKE HOUSE, PEACHFIELD ROAD, MALVERN. The Chairman adjourned the meeting for members to make a site visit.

4. CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS. None.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MEETING HELD ON THE 31 AUGUST 2006.

5.1 12. Walking Festival. The Chairman advised that whilst it had been agreed that the Conservators should not organise the Festival, individual members and staff would be involved in events. A meeting of the organising committee had taken place on the 4 October 2006 when it was agreed that he would take over as co-ordinator and that Robin Elt should become president of the Festival. The committee also agreed to reduce the size of the Festival to four days and if the programme could not be compiled by the meeting to take place on the 26 October the next Walking Festival would be postponed until 2008. This was **NOTED**.

5.2 13.1 Geopark Way – Meeting with AONB Manager. A useful meeting had taken place with Paul Esrich, the AONB Manager and members would consider some of the matters discussed in due course.

6. THE LAKE HOUSE, PEACHFIELD ROAD, MALVERN. On the proposal of Mr. Tretheway, seconded by Mr. Thomas, members agreed to recommend to the Board that the request from the occupier of The Lake House to widen his existing easement across the Common from 3.4m to 4.5m should be **AGREED**, subject to highway requirements. This was to enable the possible opening of an angling centre at his property for use of able bodied and disabled people. This permission would be given on condition that the occupier entered into a new Deed of Grant to regularise the situation.

With regard to the granting of rights of way in general, it was **AGREED** that for the next meeting officers would design a form for distribution to the public and for publication on the web site setting out the procedure for obtaining an easement.

7. GOOD NEIGHBOURS LEAFLET. It was **AGREED** that the leaflet would be amended taking into account the comments of members and 500 copies printed as an A5 booklet.

8. INFORMATION.

8.1 Mr. R. Dawe. Mr. Dawe had produced the membership and constitution of the Hollybed Commoners Association for the information of members. This was **NOTED**.

The meeting closed at 3.27 p.m.

11.2 Land Management. Mrs. Thetford presented the following report of the meeting held on the 5 October 2006 and moved its adoption. This was seconded by Mr. Witcomb.

REPORT OF LAND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE Thursday, 5 October 2006 Manor House, Malvern at 2 p.m.

Present:- Mr. B. Pilcher, Mr. J. Plant, Mr. R. Rouse, Mrs. S. Thetford (Chairman), Mr. J. Webb, Mr. R. Witcomb.

In attendance:- The Director, Conservation Officer, Administrative Officer, Mr. A. Macmillan, Mr. R. Roberts, Mr. R. Thomas, Mr. B. Wilcock and Mr. Robert Dean and Ms. Sally Parker (Land Use Consultants).

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE. Mr. A. Phillips, Dr. B. Smith, Mr. J. Tretheway.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST. None.

3. CASTLEMORTON COMMONS PLAN. Members received a presentation from Robert Dean and Sally Parker of Land Use Consultants who had been commissioned by the Malvern Heritage Project with Heritage Lottery funding to take an independent view of the management issues affecting Common Land Unit 9, which includes Castlemorton Common and Hollybed Common owned by the Conservators. Following consultation in person with a wide range of interested parties and a community meeting attended by approximately forty people, an action plan had now been prepared that recommended courses of action, including:-

- ❖ Widening the membership of the existing Tripartite meeting to form a Castlemorton Commons Co-ordinating Committee (4Cs)
- ❖ Applying for Higher level of Environmental Stewardship
- ❖ Appointing a Commons Steward
- ❖ Reviewing stock control measures

The presentation was **NOTED**. Members will receive a hard copy of the plan for discussion at the next meeting.

4. CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS. None.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MEETING HELD ON THE 27 JULY 2006.

5.1 9. Parking area adjacent to The Lake House, Peachfield Road, Malvern. The Director reported that eco-block material had been laid and the grass should now be growing through. He suggested monitoring the situation over the winter and to make a site visit next Spring.

6. HEDGE ALONG TOWNSEND WAY. The Director presented his report and circulated to members a paper from Mr. Hall-Jones giving his reasons why he felt the Conservators should plant a hedge to screen the retail area from Townsend Way. However, members were reminded that at the site meeting on the 27 July 2006 the view had been taken that planting in this area would be incongruous and that it was the duty of local planning authority to insist on planting conditions as the industrial land was developed. In the circumstances it was proposed by Mr. Witcomb, seconded by Mr. Rouse, and **AGREED** that the Conservators should not plant a hedge but that the planning authority be written to requesting that any future development of the industrial area along Townsend Way should have adequate landscaping.

It was further **AGREED** that the Conservators would not accept ownership of the hedge adjacent to the housing development following information from Malvern Hills District Council that the hedge had been planted as part of screening for the housing development.

7. ALLOTMENTS. The Director's report containing legal advice and the report previously circulated by Mr. Macmillan, was **NOTED** and whilst sympathising with Malvern Town Council, it was proposed by Mr. Witcomb, seconded by Mr. Pilcher and **CARRIED** by three votes to two, with one abstention to recommend to the Board that the legal advice was followed.

8. BRITISH LEGION MEMORIAL GARDEN AT BARNARDS GREEN. The Director presented his report in which he advised members that the British Legion currently had use of MHC land to the south of the bus shelter at Barnards Green as a Memorial Garden and that this area had been maintained by its members. However members of the organisation were finding the management beyond their capabilities and had asked if the Conservators could take over the management. The Director therefore recommended that the Conservators take on the maintenance of the Memorial Garden and that a budget figure for this was included in the 2006/07 estimates. This was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY.**

9. BOILER AT ST. ANN'S WELL CAFE AND EXTRACTOR FAN AT TOILETS. On the proposal of Mr. Witcomb, seconded by Mr. Plant, it was **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED** that in the next financial year maintenance of buildings and toilets was transferred to the Administration & Resources Committee budget.

10. TREE SAFETY SURVEY 2006. In presenting his report the Conservation Officer advised that the Tree Safety Survey had highlighted several trees in the boundary with the common requiring attention which were the responsibility of the adjoining landowners. In the circumstances he would bring these initially to the attention of the landowner but if no action was taken and they were adjacent to the highway he would advise the Highway Authority. This was noted and the tree safety work for the winter period **AGREED.** In answer to a question regarding trees growing on the east side of the Worcestershire Beacon, the Conservation Officer advised that these were programmed to be felled in 2007/08.

11. TRIPARTITE MEETING. It was **AGREED** that Mr. Plant as the local Conservator and the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Committee should represent the Board at the meeting to be held on the 6 November 2006.

12. INFORMATION.

12.1 Update on Higher Level Stewardship Application. The Conservation Officer reported that the draft form of the Environmental Plan, as required by DEFRA, had been completed on the northern and central Hills. The cost had been approximately £5,000 which was more than initially envisaged as these services were designed to be carried out on farm land not on the Hills. He reminded members, however, that this was a one-off outlay in the £60/£80,000 per year expected over the next ten years under the Scheme. This was **NOTED.**

12.2 Review of Management Plan. The Conservation Officer advised that the preparation of the draft Management Plan was taking longer than anticipated and he would be bringing it to the next meeting of the Committee on the 30 November. However, he had had a good response from consultees following circulation of the review and in particular a letter from Dr. Johnny Birks of the Vincent Wildlife Trust who congratulated the Conservators on the success of the grazing project and the general management of the Hills over the last five years. This was **NOTED**.

12.3 Archaeological Survey. A request had been received from a member of the Archaeological Service at Gloucester who was doing a PhD to survey one of the monuments on the Hills not scheduled by English Heritage. This would be in three parts, two types of electronic survey to assess what was there and to dig a trench 10m by 2m. This was noted and it was **AGREED** to give permission for the electronic survey but to refuse permission to dig a trench.

The meeting closed at 3.47 p.m.

Arising.

11.2.1 6. Hedge along Townsend Way. Mr. Hall-Jones felt that in line with the reasons the Conservators took over the land at Townsend Way which was partly to replicate other entrances into the Town, as well as the fact that the boundary on the west side was indistinct, he proposed that the question of planting be referred back for further consideration. This was seconded by Mr. Rumney but on being put to the vote the motion was lost.

11.2.2 7. Allotments. The Chairman suspended Standing Orders to permit Councillor Selby, Chairman of Malvern Town Council to advise members of the background to the Council's request to lease land and the exhaustive steps that had been taken to try and obtain alternative land. The Director then advised members of the results of enquiries made since the Committee meeting to obtain the views from the Planning Authority, Highways, Charity Commission and conservation value of the land. Mr. Macmillan then moved an amendment to the recommendation that given the unusual circumstances arising from the need to relocate allotments in order to expand the Great Malvern cemetery coupled with the lack of suitable and affordable land for allotments in Malvern, the Board agreed in principle to the Town Council's request to lease land to the Town Council on the east side of Townsend Way for allotments. This agreement would be subject to:-

- (a) detailed proposals being drawn up by the Director and Town Clerk and approved by the Board
- (b) planning permission being obtained by the Town Council for change of use together with any necessary consent from the Highways Authority
- (c) the Secretary of State being willing to exercise his powers under Section 303 of the Public Health Act 1875 and Section 19 of the Malvern Hills Act 1924 to amend the Schedule to the Malvern Hills Act 1930 to include the words "land on the east side of Townsend Way".

This was seconded by Mr. Masters. Considerable discussion took place when the following points were highlighted:-

1. The fact that the area was dedicated as community woodland.
2. The planting had been grant aided and was to compensate for the trees to be felled on the Hills.

On being put to the vote the amendment was lost by 4 votes to 14. Mrs. Thetford then confirmed her wish that the report be adopted. This was seconded by Mr. Witcomb and **CARRIED** by 17 votes to 2.

11.2.3 8. British Legion Memorial Garden at Barnards Green. The Director agreed to make enquiries as to whether the standing memorials were excluded from the maintenance carried out by the Conservators at the Memorial Garden for the next meeting of the Committee.

The report was **CARRIED**.

11.3 **ADMINISTRATION & RESOURCES**. Mr. Wilcock presented the following report of the meeting held on the 25 October 2006, including items 4 and 13 taken in committee and moved its adoption. This was seconded by Mr. Hall-Jones and **CARRIED**.

ADMINISTRATION & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 25 October 2006 at 7 p.m.

Present:- Mr. M. Cordey, Mr. A. Macmillan, Mr. A. Myatt, Mr. P. Rumney, Dr. B. Smith, Mr. J. Tretheway, Mr. B. Wilcock (Chairman).

In attendance:- The Director, Administrative Officer, Financial Consultant, Mr. R. Roberts, Mrs. S. Thetford.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**. Mr. R. Hall-Jones.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**. None.

3. **CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS**. None.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MEETING HELD ON THE 23 AUGUST 2006.

4.1 11. Old Hills Car Park. The Director reported that the car park was now open and he had received positive feedback from people using it. He was officially opening it on Sunday, 29th October as this would be an opportunity to thank the public and residents for their forbearance during the works. He felt that although the Suretrac surface had not been successful it was incumbent on the Conservators as a conservation body to try sustainable products to reduce the detrimental impact on the environment of using quarried stone from outside the area and indeed the grant from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister had been given for innovative projects in the countryside. The Director reminded members of the need for a car park at the Old Hills in view of the accidents that regularly occurred with vehicles using the northern access. The first choice was to position the new car park nearer the highway but this was refused on planning grounds.

4.2 13. Taken in committee.

5. **MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS FOR THE SIX MONTHS TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2006**. The Financial Consultant presented the accounts which were **NOTED**.

6. **REVIEW OF PARKING CHARGES**. On the proposal of Mr. Tretheway, seconded by Mr. Rumney, it was **AGREED** that the existing charges should be retained for the year 2007/08.

7. **REVIEW OF ADMINISTRATIVE CHARGES**. On the proposal of the Chairman, seconded by Mr. Tretheway, it was **AGREED** that the recommendation that the administrative charges should be increased by £5.00 from the 1 April 2007 to be reviewed bi-annually was accepted.

8. **PARLIAMENTARY FUND**. On the proposal of Mr. Macmillan, seconded by Mr. Tretheway, it was **AGREED** that the restriction on the use of the fund be changed to:-

"The Parliamentary Fund can be used for expenditure on improvements to the Board's capital assets to enable the Conservators to fulfil their statutory obligations."

9. **NEW LEGISLATION**. Members noted the Director's report and it was **AGREED** to defer making a decision until further information, including a clearer definition of the risks involved and alternative methods of obtaining specialist knowledge, was available.

10. STANDING ORDERS – FINANCIAL REGULATIONS. On the proposal of Mr. Macmillan, seconded by Mr. Tretheway, it was **AGREED** that the figure for items of expenditure at which three written quotations were required was increased from £3,000 to £5,000. It was **FURTHER AGREED** on the proposal of Mr. Tretheway, seconded by Mr. Rumney, that the Financial Regulations include a Petty Cash item as set out in the report.

11. FINANCIAL CONSULTANT. On the proposal of Dr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Tretheway, it was **AGREED** that the Financial Consultant attended the January and July Board Meetings and any other meetings of the Board if prior notice was given by a member (noon on the Tuesday prior to the meeting) that they wished to ask a question of the Financial Consultant.

12. INFORMATION.

12.1 Land Registry Working Party. The Administrative Officer advised that she would shortly be contacting members of the Working Party to agree a mutually convenient time for a meeting. This was **NOTED**.

On the proposal of the Chairman, seconded by Mr. Tretheway, it was **AGREED** that the remainder of the meeting should be taken in committee as the matters to be discussed were confidential.

The meeting closed at 8.08 p.m.

12. FORWARD STRATEGY. Dr. Smith presented the report of the Working Party meeting held on the 4 October 2006 and recommended the adoption of the Forward Strategy. This was seconded by Mr. Wilcock. Mrs. Thetford proposed an amendment to the recommendation, seconded by Mr. Webb that within the specific objectives reference to transport from the town to St. Ann's Well be deleted. However on being put to the vote the motion was lost by 7 votes to 11 against. The recommendation to adopt the Forward Strategy was then **CARRIED** by 15 votes with 4 abstentions. The Chairman moved that the Board record its thanks to Dr. Smith for all his work on the Forward Strategy and this was **CARRIED**.

13. REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES.

13.1 Malvern Spa Association. Mr. Roberts advised that work at the Clock Tower, North Malvern had slowed down largely due to finding that the anticipated spring water supply that was to be piped into the Tower had dried up. However he could allay concerns that the recently discovered brick path had been removed. Mr. Roberts also drew attention to an article in the latest Spa Association Newsletter containing a request for people to take regular flow records from springs. This was **NOTED**.

13.2 Great Malvern Town Centre Partnership. Mr. Roberts reported that at a recent meeting discussion had taken place on the removal of the plain trees from Belle Vue Island, the High Street project and the Library frontage. This was **NOTED**.

13.3 Malvern Hills AONB Joint Advisory Committee. Dr. Smith reported on the meeting held on the 22 September 2006 when a presentation had been made by a representative of Natural England and much debate had taken place on a report on Communication and Awareness Raising of the AONB. This matter was referred back to a committee of officers to report to the next meeting on the 19 January 2007. This year's study tour had been a visit to Eastnor Castle Estates. This was **NOTED**.

14. URGENT BUSINESS. None.

15. INFORMATION.

15.1 Management Report. The Director presented his following report which was **NOTED**.

MANAGEMENT REPORT

9 NOVEMBER 2006

DIRECTOR

- Met with Nick Paul, Chairman of Advantage West Midlands (Regional Development Agency)
- Attended the launch of Natural England (new government agency formed from English Nature and the Countryside Agency)
- Attended Council for Protection of Rural England AGM
- Attended meeting of Worcestershire Partnerships (amalgamation of public and private organisations)

CONSERVATION OFFICER

- Continuing work on Management Plan
- Met with contractor to look at woodland management
- 5 meetings with FWAG re Stewardship application
- Meeting with Paul Ferret, Animal Health Division of Trading Standards
- Meeting with Butterfly Conservation
- Talk to Hang Gliding Club on scrub clearance
- Meeting with Voluntary Site Wardens

CONTRACTORS

- Cleaned out drains outside the Elms School to prevent flooding
- Cleared ditch on Clevelode Lane
- Replaced worn out wooden door to top shed and replaced with roller shutter door

FIELD STAFF

- Cleared culvert at the bottom of Geraldine Road/Poolbrook Road junction
- Cut and collect machine on areas at Malvern Common and Castlemorton
- Moved cattle from North Hill to End Hill and from End Hill to Sugarloaf
- Mowed grass at Link Common, Poolbrook, Wells Road and Hall Green areas
- Moved grazing compartment on middle Hills
- Scrub clearance on Sugarloaf

Sheep Numbers at 31 October 2006

147 ewes

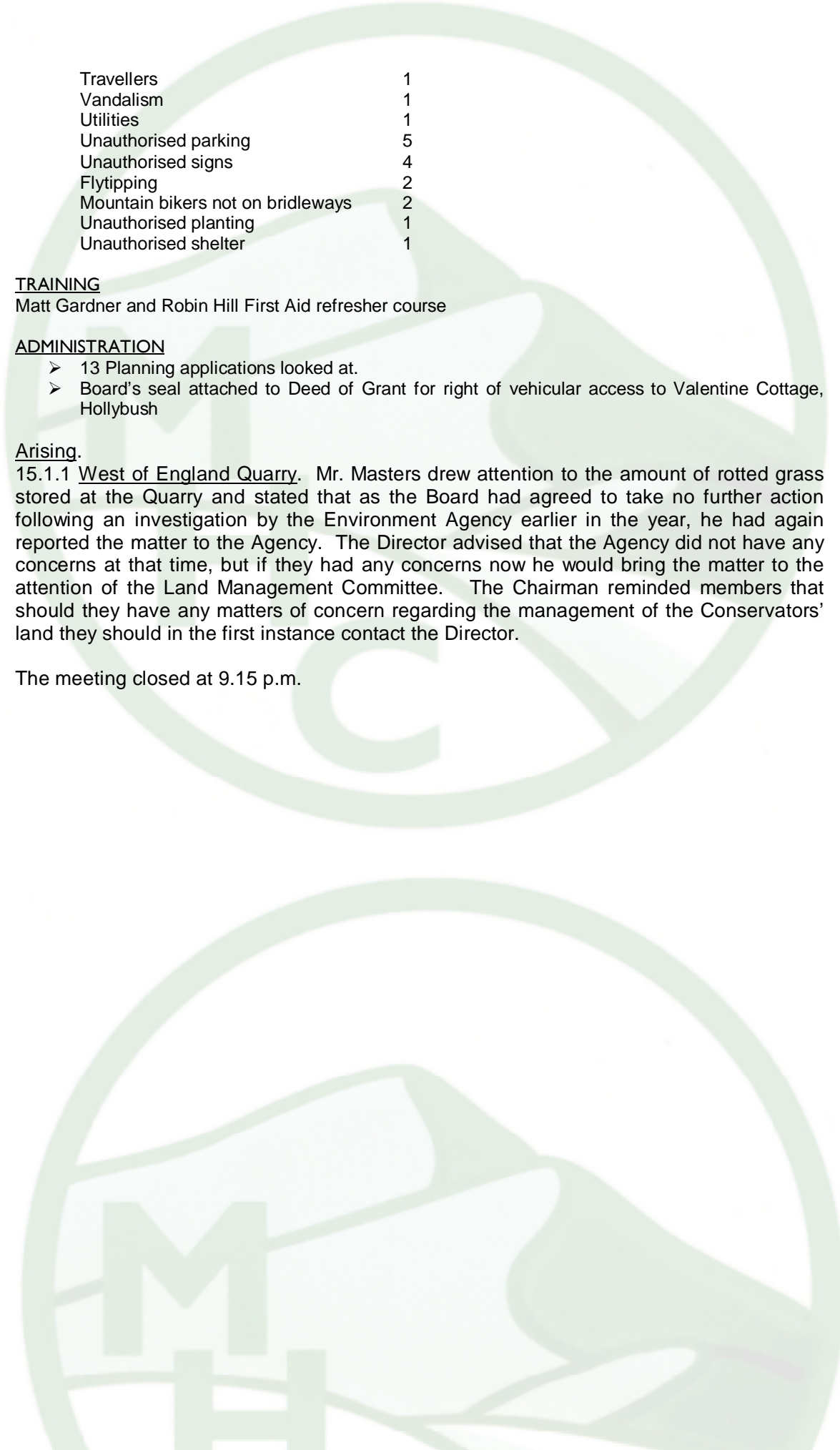
50 lambs

6 Cheviot tups (2 Texel tups sold and 4 Cheviot tups purchased)

WARDENS

- Led work party for Natural England on Pinnacle Hill
- Site meetings with utility companies:-
 - Enterprise (BT) Newland Common 27/9
 - Balfour Beatty (Severn Trent) Peachfield 27/9
 - Severn Trent, Peachfield 6/10
 - BT Jubilee Drive 4 & 6/10
- Three Conservation Days held
- Strimmed car parks
- Completed Beacon newsletter
- Meeting with architect at British Camp toilets
- Organised volunteers social event
- Voluntary Wardens' meeting
- Inductions for 4 new Voluntary Site Wardens and attended Introduction to Countryside Management Course under the Worcestershire Wardens Partnership
- 3 break-ins to cars at Blackhill reported to Police. Warning signs now displayed in Hill car parks
- Byelaw incidents:-

Illegal camping	1
Burnt out cars	1
Cars for sale on common	1



Travellers	1
Vandalism	1
Utilities	1
Unauthorised parking	5
Unauthorised signs	4
Flytipping	2
Mountain bikers not on bridleways	2
Unauthorised planting	1
Unauthorised shelter	1

TRAINING

Matt Gardner and Robin Hill First Aid refresher course

ADMINISTRATION

- 13 Planning applications looked at.
- Board's seal attached to Deed of Grant for right of vehicular access to Valentine Cottage, Hollybush

Arising.

15.1.1 West of England Quarry. Mr. Masters drew attention to the amount of rotted grass stored at the Quarry and stated that as the Board had agreed to take no further action following an investigation by the Environment Agency earlier in the year, he had again reported the matter to the Agency. The Director advised that the Agency did not have any concerns at that time, but if they had any concerns now he would bring the matter to the attention of the Land Management Committee. The Chairman reminded members that should they have any matters of concern regarding the management of the Conservators' land they should in the first instance contact the Director.

The meeting closed at 9.15 p.m.