

MALVERN HILLS CONSERVATORS ANNUAL MEETING OF THE BOARD

13 November 2008 7 pm

The Committee Room, The Council House, Malvern

Present:- Mrs S Adeney, Mr R Chamings, Mr C Cheeseman, Mrs K Kelly, Mr M Morgan, Mr B Pilcher, Mr A Phillips, Mr R Roberts (Chairman), Mr C Rouse, Dr B Smith, Mr J Smith, Mr M Soley, Mr R Stockton, Mrs S Thetford, Mr R Thomas, Mr P Tuthill, Mr D Watkins, Mr P Watson, Mr W Watts, Mr J Webb, Mr B Wilcock.

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

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE. Dr T Hunt, Mr R Hall-Jones, Mr A Myatt, Mr C Smith, Mrs H Stace, Mr P Watts.

2. ANNUAL REPORT OF CHAIRMAN FOR THE PREVIOUS YEAR. Mr Roberts presented his report as follows:-

"When I look back over my first year as Chairman of the Board of the Malvern Hills Conservators, I cannot help but be pleased with everything that has been achieved during that time. Reading through previous Annual Reports one becomes aware that this is a common theme every year. It is proof, if proof were needed, that the Conservators are a very active and energetic organization, working constantly for the future of Malvern Hills and Commons.

"The year started with a new Board, of which 12 members were newly elected or appointed. It takes a little while for us to get to know each other. I am pleased to say that we are all still working for the future protection of the land we own and manage on behalf of the public.

"Some things we do at once, others take a while. I am reminded, reading the 2002 Report, that we were then celebrating the success of the Heritage Lottery Fund Grant some three years after the first application had been sent in. This year, another six years on, I can now report that at long last the work is being completed, having crossed many hurdles on the way. The HLF paid for the pioneering work that demonstrated that the reintroduction of grazing would be a practical proposition. Work on installing the last Cattle Grids at Chase End Hill has started and should be completed by the end of this year. Working together with the Malvern Spa Association and the local AONB Officers, many of the Water Features on our land have been renovated or restored, St Ann's Well being the most ambitious of those projects.

"Now we have demonstrated that grazing is feasible and with the confirmation of Higher Level Stewardship for the next ten years, we are asking farmers and commoners to come forward and take on the stock. We have been delighted with the interest shown in tendering for grazing rights on the Northern and Central Hills. The Southern Hills and Castlemorton Common will be going out to tender next year. I look forward to seeing the Hills being grazed again as they were when I was a child.

"We have now successfully obtained title to most of the anomalous areas of land highlighted during the registration of the majority of the Conservators' land in 2004 with the Land Registry. We expect this to be finalised during next year. This has been a very difficult job for our staff as land has been inherited, purchased or gifted to us in many small dribs and drabs over the years; our original 550 acres having now expanded to cover 3,000 (1,200 hectares).

"As a result of lessons learned from problems that arose around the proposed development of the Old Railway Yard, off Peachfield Road, our Easement policy has now been redrafted to further protect Conservators' rights on Common Land.

"The issue of Representation came to the fore again and as a result we sought advice from

Parliamentary Agents to see if another way was open for changing representation without the need for an expensive Act of Parliament. They replied to the effect that this could not be done at this time.

"I have been particularly disturbed by the official interpretation of the new National Rules regarding Conflict of Interest. In my view it disenfranchises local people from being fully represented by their elected councillor when he or she is also a Malvern Hills Conservator. I cannot believe that was the intention when these rules were drafted.

"A great step forward in communication with the public has already taken place with the setting up of the Recreation Advisory Panel. About a dozen representative user groups have begun to meet several times a year to discuss issues that may affect their mutual enjoyment of the Hills and Commons.

"Returning to my opening comments, I would like to pledge that during my term as Chairman, I would like to improve recognition of the hard work and dedication of the Organization as a whole. It is easy for people to spot little things that niggle them when walking the Hills or Commons but it is not so easy for them to spot all the good things that are being done on a regular basis. If the work is not done it is soon very obvious to everybody. We are lucky to have a very hard working, dedicated and loyal staff. They cannot be praised too highly."

3. MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES FOR THE YEAR TO 31 OCTOBER 2009. The membership of Committees for the year was **AGREED** as follows:-

Administration & Resources

Cordey, M
Hall-Jones, R
Morgan, M
Myatt, A
Roberts, R (ex-officio)
Smith, B
Smith, J
Soley, M
Stockton, R
Thomas, R (ex-officio)
Tuthill, P
Watkins, D
Watson, P
Watts, P
Wilcock, B

Land Management

Adeney, Mrs S
Chamings, R
Cheeseman, C
Hunt, T
Kelly, Mrs J
Phillips, A
Pilcher, B
Plant, J
Roberts, R (ex-officio)
Rouse, C
Smith, C
Stace, Mrs H
Thetford, Mrs S
Thomas, R (ex-officio)
Watts, W
Webb, J

4. ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO SERVE ON OUTSIDE BODIES FOR THE YEAR TO 31 OCTOBER 2009.

4.1 Malvern Hills AONB Joint Advisory Committee. On the proposal of Mr Wilcock, seconded by the Chairman, Dr Smith was **RE-ELECTED** as the Board's representative for the forthcoming year.

4.2 Malvern Spa Association. On the proposal of Dr Smith, seconded by Mr Cheeseman, the Chairman was **RE-ELECTED** as the Board's representative for the forthcoming year.

4.3 Great Malvern Town Centre Partnership. On the proposal of Mr Wilcock, seconded by Mr Rouse, the Chairman was **RE-ELECTED** to represent the Board for the forthcoming year.

5. APPOINTMENT OF 2 MEMBERS TO SERVE ON THE CASTLEMORTON COMMON CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE (4Cs). On the proposal of Mr Pilcher, seconded by Mr

Rouse, Mrs Thetford and Mr Rouse, were **RE-ELECTED** to represent the Board on the Committee for the year to 31 October 2009.

6. APPOINTMENT OF 4 MEMBERS TO THE RECREATION ADVISORY PANEL. On the proposal of Mr Wilcock, seconded by Mr Thomas, the existing representatives, Mr Chamings, Mr Pilcher, Mr Roberts and Mrs Thetford, were **RE-ELECTED** to serve on the Panel for the year to 31 October 2009.

7. APPOINTMENT OF 4 MEMBERS TO SERVE ON THE WILDLIFE PANEL. Mrs Adeney, Mrs Stace, Mrs Thetford and Mr Watson were **ELECTED** to serve on the Panel for the year to 31 October 2009.

8. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS. The Chairman read a letter from Mrs Hazel Davis thanking Board members for their generous contribution to her retirement gift.

9. PUBLIC QUESTIONS. None.

10. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST. None.

11. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES. On the proposal of Mrs Adeney, seconded by Mr Watkins, it was **AGREED** that the Minutes of the meeting held on the 11 September 2008 should be **CONFIRMED** and **SIGNED** as a true and correct record.

12. MATTERS ARISING.

12.1 7.1 Draft Grazing Contract and Application Procedure. In answer to a question the Conservation Officer advised that five applications had been received for the grazing of the Central Hills and interviews would take place on the 4th December. An applicant had been chosen for the grazing contract for the Northern Hills but contracts had not yet been signed. This was **NOTED**.

12.2 9.1 Tyres on the Common adjacent to The Homestead, Clevelode Lane, Guarlford. Taken in committee.

13. COMMITTEE REPORTS.

13.1 LAND MANAGEMENT. Mrs Thetford presented the report of the meeting held on the 2 October 2008 and moved its adoption. This was seconded by Mr Rouse.

LAND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
2 October 2008 4 pm

Present:- Mr C Cheeseman, Mr A Phillips, Mr J Plant, Mr R Roberts, Mr C Rouse, Mr C Smith, Mrs S Thetford (Chairman), Mr W Watts.

In attendance:- The Director, Administrative Officer, Conservation Officer, 2 members of the public.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE. Mr R Chamings, Dr T Hunt, Mrs J Kelly, Mr B Pilcher, Mrs H Stace, Mr R Thomas.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST. None.

3. CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS. None.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MEETING HELD ON THE 7 AUGUST 2008.

4.1 4.2 Brown Signs. The Director reported that the matter was not now being pursued with the Local Government Ombudsman and in the circumstances he would ask Herefordshire Council to replace the sign. *This was* **NOTED**.

4.2 5. Malvern Hills AONB draft Project Brief on Identification of Key Views to and from the Malvern Hills AONB. The Director reported that Malvern Hills and Wye Valley AONBs had been consulted over plans for the erection of three wind turbines at Strensham. Malvern Hills AONB had decided not to make any comment until a planning application had been submitted. Should it reach the planning stage the Director would bring the application to the attention of the Board for comment as the site would be visible from British Camp and the southern Hills. *This was **NOTED**.*

4.3 9. Management of Trees in Upper Colwall. The Conservation Officer reported that in view of the major works being carried out to the railway bridge in Colwall there had recently been incidents of large lorries delivering to Coca Cola Shweppes getting stuck on the sharp bend in Walwyn Road, Upper Colwall at the Chase Road junction. He had therefore been working with the Highways Authority to alleviate the problem which entails cutting back trees overhanging the highway. This work would be commenced at the end October/beginning of November. *This was **NOTED**.*

5. BRIDLEWAY ACROSS MALVERN LINK COMMON. Mr Smith proposed the adoption of the recommendation that the Committee supported the re-seeding and raising of 75 metres of the bridleway using a free drainage mixture. This was seconded by Mr Roberts and **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED**.

6. GULLET QUARRY. The Conservation Officer presented his report which had been prepared following a site meeting with Peter Oliver of the Herefordshire and Worcestershire Earth Heritage Trust when Mr Oliver explained his proposal for the re-exposure of the 'unconformity' situated at the west side of Gullet Quarry to make this important feature more accessible for educational purposes. In his report the Conservation Officer drew attention to the amount of clearing required and the wildlife importance of this SSSI designated area which would be affected. He therefore recommended that as there were 70 quarries on Conservators' land, a full assessment of the quarries on the Malvern Hills should be carried out. A brief had been produced by Consultants to carry out this work for which funding might be available through the Aggregate Levy Sustainability Fund.

*On the proposal of Mr Smith, seconded by Mr Phillips, it was **AGREED** by six votes to two that work did not proceed at the Gullet Quarry.*

With regard to the assessment of all the quarries on the Malvern Hills, *it was **AGREED** that the Director and Conservation Officer, in consultation with the Earth Heritage Trust, prepare a paper for the next meeting of the Committee setting out the issues relating to quarries.*

7. FENCE AT BERINGTON QUARRY. In presenting the paper the Conservation Officer reported that following a site visit made by members prior to the meeting, he wished to amend his recommendation that the existing fence remained at the top and that another fence consisting of two strands of wire be erected close to the Quarry. This would make it safe whilst allowing cattle along the side and top. With regard to the landslip shown in *fig 2* of his report, he would make enquiries of suitable contractors to ensure that this was made safe before the fencing work took place. If members agreed to this work, the Administration & Resources Committee would be asked to approve this capital expenditure.

*On the proposal of Mr Roberts, seconded by Mr Smith, this was **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED**.*

8. MANAGEMENT REPORT – STOCK NUMBERS. The Conservation Officer reminded members of the request at the last Board meeting that all the sheep and cattle on Conservators' land was given in the bi-monthly Management Report. In his report the Conservation Officer stated that this would be very time-consuming and whilst it was considered important that there should be a review of the grazing on the Hills he felt that this should be annually and recorded in the Annual Report. He therefore made the following recommendations:-

(a) That members agree that there will be a review of the livestock numbers grazing on MHC land in the Annual Report.

*On the proposal of Mr Smith, seconded by Mr Rouse, the recommendation was **CARRIED** with two abstentions.*

(b) That officers will only report the livestock that they are the "Registered Keepers" for in the Management Report.

*On the proposal of Mr Smith, seconded by Mr Rouse, the recommendation was **CARRIED** with two abstentions.*

9. REPORT OF MEETING OF THE RECREATION ADVISORY PANEL. In presenting the report of the meeting, the Director reminded members that these were informal meetings of recreational bodies that use the Hills and was an opportunity for a free exchange of issues and ideas. Although some of the topics discussed might result in a recommendation to the Committee, these reports did not form the official view of the Conservators and therefore including them with committee reports could mislead the public and press into thinking that they were part of the Board's deliberations. He felt therefore that it was not helpful for these early discussions to be made public and suggested that in future these reports and those of the Wildlife Advisory Panel should be appended to Agendas for the information of members only.

It was **AGREED** to obtain further information on this suggestion and if necessary ask the Administration & Resources Committee to consider the matter.

The report was **NOTED**.

10. INFORMATION.

10.1 112 Old Hills Planning Application. The Director reported that a local authority planning application had been submitted for rebuilding the cottage which had been completely destroyed. The new building would be of a similar design and footprint to the original cottage and he had obtained the views of the local member who was not opposed to it. A letter had been sent to the agent asking for the Conservators to be kept informed of work and he would be requesting the Planning Authority to ensure that there was sufficient parking within the boundary of the property. This was **NOTED**.

10.2 Townsend Way Reinstatement. Following a substantial fire at a unit on the Spring Lane Industrial Estate, the electricity pylons off Townsend Way had been affected. During repairs considerable damage had occurred to the Conservators' land. He had had assurance from Eon that complete reinstatement would be carried out. This was **NOTED**.

The meeting closed at 5.40 pm.

Arising.

13.1.1 4.3 Management of Trees in Upper Colwall. The Conservation Officer advised that the work of cutting back the trees overhanging the highway had been completed. This was **NOTED**.

13.1.2 8. Management Report – Stock Numbers. Mr Chamings advised that his request at the last Board meeting that the total number of sheep and cattle grazing Conservators' land referred only to the stock of graziers contracted by the Board. In the circumstances he proposed that in the bi-monthly Management Report members should be informed of exact numbers of cattle and sheep grazed by the grazier under contract to the Board on the Northern and Central Hills. This proposal was not seconded and therefore the Committee's recommendation was **CARRIED**.

13.1.3 10.1 112 Old Hills Planning Application. The Director reported that the local authority planning application had been withdrawn. This was **NOTED**.

13.1.4 10.2 Townsend Way Reinstatement. The Director reported that reinstatement work had taken place but as this was carried out late in the season the area would be monitored and if by the spring the ground had not recovered satisfactorily, further reinstatement work would be required. This was **NOTED**.

The report was **CARRIED**.

13.2 ADMINISTRATION & RESOURCES. Mr Wilcock presented the report of the meeting held on the 16 October 2008 and apart from items to be taken in committee, moved its adoption. This was seconded by Mr Cheeseman.

ADMINISTRATION & RESOURCES COMMITTEE
16 October 2008 7pm Manor House Malvern

Present:- Mrs S Adeney, Mr M Cordey, Mr A Myatt, Mr R Roberts, Mr P Tuthill, Mr D Watkins, Mr P Watson, Mr P Watts, Mr B Wilcock (Chairman).

In attendance:- The Director, Administrative Officer, Conservation Officer, Financial Consultant, Financial Assistant, Mrs S Thetford.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE. Mr R Hall-Jones, Dr B Smith, Mr J Smith, Mr R Thomas.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

Mr M Cordey Item 7

3. CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS. None.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MEETING HELD ON THE 21 AUGUST 2008.

4.1 4.1 The Role of Conservators appointed by MHDC on Planning Matters. A letter had been received from the Department for Communities and Local Government regretting the concerns members had about the affects of the provisions of the 2007 Model Code of Conduct on members appointed to the Board by Malvern Hills District Council and explaining the reasons for the revisions.

*This was **NOTED**.*

4.2 7. Conservatory at 34 Wyche Road, Malvern. Members noted the new design for the conservatory which they felt was more in keeping with the property. The cost, including the base, totalled £5,639.56, excluding VAT.

*It was proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Mr Cordey and **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED** that the Director be instructed to arrange for the work to be carried out.*

5. UPDATE ON WASTE STORAGE FACILITY. The Director advised that in carrying out preliminary investigations at the site prior to construction of the facility at the Upper Wyche Quarry, it had been discovered that there was 11 metres of landfill material. A structural engineer had suggested that to make the floor sound would require piling which would add considerably to the cost

*This was **NOTED** and it was **AGREED** that the Structural Engineer should be requested to look into alternative methods of solving the problem and the Director would report the findings to the next meeting of the Committee.*

6. REVIEW OF PARKING CHARGES.

*On the proposal Mr Roberts, seconded by Mr Watson, it was **AGREED** to recommend to the Board that the existing charges were retained for the year 2009/10.*

7. INVESTMENT POLICY. In presenting her report, the Financial Consultant reminded members that if they wished to change the current policy they would need to obtain appropriate professional advice.

*This was noted and following a full debate it was proposed by Mr Tuthill, seconded by Mr Watson, and **CARRIED** by 5 votes in favour and 3 abstentions, to recommend to the Board that no more than £500,000.00 should be invested with one organisation.*

The Financial Consultant was requested to produce a report to the Board indicating the full implications of this proposal.

8. REVIEW OF OVERGROUND EASEMENT POLICY GUIDELINES. The Administrative Officer reported that comments had been received from two members and these concerns had been addressed in the draft policy circulated. However following a meeting with Planning Officers it had been noted that the number of properties sharing an access without the need for improvements to the track varied and therefore it was now recommended that all requests should be treated the same. She therefore circulated a revised policy which was considered and subject to checking these points with the Board's legal adviser the following amendments were made:-

(a) The third bullet point:

The Board reserves the right to withdraw permission if there is any variation subsequent to the detailed planning permission originally considered by the Board at 2.2.

(b) With regard to the policy guidelines (paper B):

- *The first paragraph would be expanded to include all the Board's duties under the Acts.*
- *Item (f) would be amended to request that residents obtain prior approval before mowing the adjoining common.*

9. STAFF CONDITIONS OF SERVICE.

*On the proposal of the Chairman, seconded by Mr Watts, it was **AGREED** nem con to accept the recommendation that to keep in line with authorities in the area, from the 1 April 2009 the annual leave entitlement for Malvern Hills Conservators' staff, where applicable, should be increased to 25 days increasing to 30 days after 5 years' continuous service.*

10. REQUEST FROM LAND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE FOR APPROVAL OF CAPITAL EXPENDITURE FOR BERINGTON QUARRY FENCE.

*On the proposal of Mr Roberts, seconded by Mrs Adeney, it was **AGREED** nem con that the cost of the new fence should be financed from the Parliamentary Fund.*

11. INFORMATION.

11.1 Belwin Rules. The Director advised that following his enquiry as to whether the Board could claim for funds for flood damage repair under the Belwin Rules, he had received a letter from the Service Leader Highways and Countryside at Worcestershire County Council stating that the Council was unable to claim any funds from that source. *This was **NOTED**.*

11.2 Wyche Public Conveniences. A letter had been received from the Property Operations Manager at Herefordshire Council expressing the Council's appreciation and thanks to the Board for funding the refurbishment works. *This was **NOTED**.*

On the proposal of the Chairman, seconded by Mr Roberts, 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 8.33 pm.

Arising.

13.2.1 11.2 Wyche Public Conveniences. Mr Stockton added his thanks to the Board for financing the excellent refurbishment work.

The report, apart from items 7 and 11, was **CARRIED**.

14. REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES.

14.1 Malvern Spa Association. Mr Roberts reported that a Halloween story telling evening had taken place at Malvern Wells and that there would be a talk on dousing by Mr Cedric Jackson on 20th November and a Christmas party at Guesten Room. This was **NOTED**.

14.2 Great Malvern Town Centre Partnership. Mr Roberts advised that there had been no meetings recently and none were planned. This was **NOTED**.

14.3 Malvern Hills AONB Joint Advisory Committee. Dr Smith began his report by advising that he had been re-elected as Chairman of the JAC and Professor John Raine, Vice Chairman for the forthcoming year. Other items discussed at the last meeting had included the results of a survey of historic buildings in the AONB, the responses to the draft Management Plan and suggestions for a new AONB logo. A visit had been made to the Forest of Boland and a Study Tour which included schemes for renewable energy from wind turbines to composting. This was **NOTED**.

Following an enquiry as to whether the AONB had discussed the South Worcestershire Core Strategy, it was **AGREED** that should the AONB's planning consultant's report on the Strategy contain recommendations the Director should bring these to the attention of the Land Management Committee.

15. URGENT BUSINESS. Taken in committee.

16. INFORMATION.

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

MANAGEMENT REPORT

13 NOVEMBER 2006

DIRECTOR

- At the invitation of the AONB Manager met with Ciaran Gannon, Natural England Regional Director
- Met with Kevin Hewitt, Worcestershire Highways Authority to improve understanding of easements
- Met with MHDC Planning Officers to discuss easement policy
- Met with residents to resolve conflict with parking around Adelaide House, West Malvern
- Attended AONB Joint Advisory Committee annual tour
- Attended CPRE AGM
- Met with football club representative at Colwall regarding railway bridge construction work

CONSERVATION OFFICER

- 8 Site visits following enquiries about tree clearance/safety work from the public.
- Passed Inspection from Worcester Trading Standards about Livestock records.
- Planned winter scrub programme with operations manager.
- Planned winter tree safety work – contract to go to tender in December.
- Letting of the grazing:
 - Northern hills – Viewing day/Applications sift/Interviews/contract negotiation.
 - Central Hills – Production of Advert, particulars/viewing day.
- MHAONB JAC meeting.
- Fixed point photography completed.
- 2 meetings with natural England to plan scrub management on the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).
- Meeting with Coca cola about timing of the traffic management for the tree work at upper Colwall to coincide with their lorry deliveries.
- Arranged a traditional coppicing course for the volunteers.
- Meeting with the Herefordshire County Botanical recorder.

- Meeting with the Geology group about the Quarry Champions project.

FIELD STAFF

- Transferred cattle to Colwall Lands for TB test and Blue Tongue vaccination
- Completed mowing for the season
- Repairs to the zig zag path from Ivy Scar Rock, North Hill
- Clearing trees on Specially Managed Area below Hayslad Spring and also at Castlemorton below Fir Tree Cottage
- Scrub clearing on Castlemorton Common

Stock Numbers at 5 November 2008

134 ewes
 130 lambs
 42 last year's lambs
 18 wethers
 8 rams
 14 cattle

WARDENS

- Induction and training in progress for members of Malvern Rotary Club who have volunteered to take on management of Dales Hall Bog Specially Managed Area
- Beacon Newsletter completed
- Compiled a questionnaire for conservation volunteers to help guide developments
- Put up 30 dormouse boxes around Midsummer Hills as part of national monitoring scheme
- Conservation Days held at Hayslad Bog, Ballard Land, Old Hollow, Swinyard Hill and Gullet Quarry
- 2 cars broken into in car parks – police advised
- Strimming of car parks
- Attended meeting of Voluntary Wardens
- Byelaw incidents:-

Unauthorised skip		3
Unauthorised Signs		9
Unauthorised work by utility companies	6	
Driving on common		6
Flytipping		8
Damage to common (removal van)		1
Unauthorised parking		8
Overnight parking		7
Mountain bikers not on bridleways		14
Garden rubbish dumped	2	
Camping		1
Mountain boarding		3
Boundary issues		3
Builders' materials on common	3	

TRAINING

- Wardens Nicky Quinn and Richard Vale attended a First Aid refresher course
- Voluntary Warden attended a one day brushcutter course
- Dan Lovatt obtained his NVQ Level 2 in Environmental Conservation
- Director, Administrative Officer, Chairman of the Board and Chairman of Land Management Committee attended a half-day course on interview techniques

ADMINISTRATION

- 10 planning applications considered and comments made on 1.

16.2 National Trust Council. The Director was congratulated on his recent appointment to the Council.

On the proposal of the Chairman, seconded by Mr Wilcock, it was **AGREED** that the public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting as the matters to be discussed were confidential.

The meeting closed at 9.15 pm.