

Supporting Biodiversity in a Climate Emergency

Wild Maidenhead

Annual General Meeting

14th April 2021 via Zoom

8.00 - 9.15 pm

AGENDA

7.50pm Click the link in your invitation and enter the 'waiting room'

8.00pm AGM beginning with apologies for absence

Approval of the Minutes of the 2020 AGM

Report from the Chair

Report from the Treasurer

Approval of accounts for the year to 31st January 2021

Election of Officers

8.20pm Wild Maidenhead and climate change, Fiona Hewer

8.30pm Keynote speech on climate change from Peter Gibbs
FRMetS, former BBC weatherman, Radio 4 Costing the
Earth presenter and Chair of Gardeners' Question Time

9.15pm Close

Wild Maidenhead AGM

27th April 2020 7:30pm

Location: Zoom

Apologies from

Liz Hornby, Sue and Tom Elliott, Ken Cottam, Brenda Ilott

Attendees (34)

Minutes

Minutes from the 2019 AGM had been circulated and were accepted.

Report from the chair

Fiona had circulated the report before the meeting. No questions were asked so report accepted.

Election of officers

Chair – Fiona Hewer

Treasurer – Mark Hemmings

Press Officer – Jan Stannard

Membership Secretary – Martin Woolner

Officers – Deborah Mason, Trevor Smith and Rachel Cook

There were no nominations for Secretary. Election of officers was proposed by Ian Rose and seconded by Brian Clews with the majority voting in favour and no objections.

Accounts for the year to 31st January 2020

Mark explained that net revenue was down in part due to the benefit from the previous year of grants from RBWM. Membership had grown over the year, but still waiting on some renewals. 150 people had signed up to Wild About Gardens scheme.

Thanks to Shanly Foundation for donation for bumblebees. Trevor Smith is leading on Wilding Ockwells. Thanks to Waltham Place for donation and Shane Kennedy and Sandra Baker for their monthly donations. Thanks also to Mrs Oppenheimer of Waltham Place Farm for her donation. The accounts were proposed by Fiona Hewer and seconded by Deborah Mason with the majority voting in favour and no objections.

Fiona thanked Mark for putting the accounts together.

Discussion about future activities

Fiona gave a presentation on current and future activities relating to the 7 key habitats, Wild About Gardens Awards, the LookWild! Film competition and Imperial College project on toads. It was followed by a Q&A session covering a range of topics from wild flower planting, RBWM mowing practices, government advice on ecological surveying, Battlemead surveying, recent articles in Conservation Land Management, the wonders of the photos on the Wild Maidenhead Facebook page during lockdown and the growth in other Wild groups which is adding to the established Wild Maidenhead, Wild Cookham and Wildlife in Ascot with Wild About Datchet, Wild Eton and Eton Wick, Wild Marlow and Wild Wooburn Green.

The meeting closed at 8:15pm

Chair's report to the Wild Maidenhead AGM

14 April 2021

This is our fifth AGM and our second via zoom. We are grateful to graphic designer, Rhiannon Flemming, for creating a zoom background version of our logo, but sorry that it has had quite so much use!

Thank you to all our paid-up members who have stuck with us through a difficult year, and to the new members who have joined us. Your commitment has given us the credibility to influence decision-makers in our campaigns to protect the water birds at Battlemead, have protections and enhancements for biodiversity added to the draft Borough Local Plan and have Natural Capital Theme actions in the Borough Council's Environment & Climate Strategy.

Our facebook supporters have grown to 1700. It's a pleasure to see so many people sharing their personal experiences of nature, learning about wildlife and enjoying some spectacular photographs.

Our Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) work has continued, but has been somewhat impeded by lockdown. Projects supporting the LBAP's species for special focus have included: a Master's degree dissertation on Common Toads by Edward Day of Imperial College; maintaining the toad ladders and increasing the area they cover; entering our citizen science Stag Beetle data into the iRecord national database; starting a Hedgehog Highways project; and planting for Bumblebees at Ockwells and Thriftwood Park. We also ran our annual Wild About Gardens Awards, investigated ancient hedgerows at White Place Farm; planted more native hedgerow at Battlemead, and planted wildflowers and nectar-rich plants in public parks. Following the adoption of the RBWM Environment and Climate Strategy in December 2020, the Council is now fully engaged in creating a borough-wide biodiversity action plan. It has taken five years, but it is wonderful to have RBWM on board! Thank you to Sarah Bowden and others in the RBWM Climate Emergency Coalition, and to Councillor Donna Stimson.

We are grateful to SUEZ recovery and recycling UK for a significant grant and to individual donors for supporting our work.

I am delighted to report that the family of local Wilds group continues to grow and there are now seven groups covering the whole Windsor & Maidenhead Council area, including the WildSL6 young conservationists group. We are working with the Wilds on the RBWM Borough-wide Biodiversity Action Plan, and meet frequently to support each other in a variety of projects.

Congratulations to Mark Hemmings on the publication of his book "Ice and Man against Nature: A Countryside History of Maidenhead" and thank you for donating the royalties from its sales.

This year we were hit by another Flood Alert declared on Christmas eve, and flooding problems lingered on into February. Flooding of the Thames is a normal experience for our wildlife, but the impacts of increasing frequency due to climate change could be significant.

Our events programme has continued throughout lockdown on zoom with monthly talks including on moths, gardening and local natural history. As lockdown eases we expect to continue with hybrid online and in person events to support those still shielding and those who prefer online.

This year Wild Maidenhead has shared our experiences with others through talks to groups including Parish Councils in Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire, Reading Abbey Rotary Club, Greener Henley and the Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre Spring Conference.

None of the main pieces of work I have briefly mentioned, and all the other activities, would have been possible without the hard working Wild Maidenhead Committee: Rachel Cook, Mark Hemmings, Deborah Mason, Trevor Smith, Jan Stannard and Martin Woolner who have been ably supported by Brian Clews, Gill Evans, Tony Gale and Lucinda Wells. Thank you all very much indeed.

Treasurer's Report of Wild Maidenhead Financial Accounts 2020.21

I am pleased to report that at the end of our financial year on 31st January 2021, we had 227 members who donated their subscriptions of £5 each. We should also acknowledge three members who donate that subscription monthly rather than annually, being Shane Kennedy, Tracey Baldwin and Sandra Baker. A large donation of £1250 was received late in the year from Suez Recycling, which has been earmarked for the Hedgehog Superhighways Project. Other income was £162 came from the Bisham Bird Box event and £137 from royalties of the sale of the book about the Maidenhead Countryside.

Your contributions has allowed the committee to employed an ecologist this year and pay 50% of the cost to try to support our biodiversity ambitions for Battlemead Common. Between lockdowns, a group of volunteers was able to plant at Ockwells Park, spending £500 on wild plants and seeds to support Bumblebees, from the donation from Shanly Foundation, and we sent £100 to Marlow Hedgehogs to support their work on looking after sickly hogs from Maidenhead.

We expect to increase the number of small projects that we can arrange in the coming year, including 10% rewilding in Maidenhead Parks, supporting the Wild About Gardens Project, and a new project of Homes for House Sparrows.

Wild Maidenhead Financial Accounts to 31st January 2021

Bank balance	5532.09
Cash in hand	369.57
Invoice pending	
Cheque not cashed	
Total	5901.66

Subscriptions	1388
Donations	1461.57
Other inc.	333.22
Total Income	3182.79
Less expenses	-1636.5
Total income less expenses	1546.29
Net Awards & Grants 2020/1	-770
Net Revenue	776.29
Reserves of Awards & Grants	2539.99
Less Awards & Grants c'fwd	-1769.99
B'Fwd Bank bal.	4216.17
B'Fwd Cash in hand	139.2
Total	5901.66