

Minutes of the Gloucestershire Geology Trust (GGT) 12th Annual General Meeting

The Geological Records Centre, Brockworth,

Sunday 24th October, 2010

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks

Mark Campbell [MC] welcomed all the members present.

2. Apologies were received from:

Charles Pierce, Hellen O'Connor, Alan McKay, Anne Seymour, Peter Wilson, Bob King, Barten Venner, Dave Green, Linda Stone, Martin Williams, Peter Lawrance.

3. Approval of the Minutes of the 11th AGM

The Minutes of the 11th AGM were approved and signed by the Chairman before the assembled members.

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes

None

5. Treasurers Report

David Owen delivered the Treasurers Report, in the absence of the Treasurer, Prof. Peter Wilson

Treasurers Report for the year ending 31.7.2010

Poor economic climate

Last year the Trustees reported a 24% decline in activity, and consequentially a small loss of c3%. Conditions in 2009-10 did not improve and the amount and range of grants successfully bid for fell by a further 50%. Over two years we have seen income fall from over £120,000 to half that. With such a dramatic fall in income the financial outcome is much better than could be expected but not good. The prospects for improvement in the current year are equally not good.

A vital service

This placing the Trust in a difficult position because maintaining a permanent Gloucestershire Geological Records Centre, supported by experienced volunteers and with the minimum professional paid supervision costs at least £20,000 per annum. The record centre provides vital geological information and interpretation to support a wide range of commercial and public infrastructure development. However it is not funded and in the present poor economic climate its future is uncertain.

Positive Response to lack of grant support

Grant support in the past year halved to c£40,000 but other income has doubled this year to c£19,000. Sales of publications rose to c£1250, although this needs to improve still, and donations (at over £3,000) were most welcome. The most promising achievement was c£13,000 from the provision of professional knowledge/skills from information held within the Record Centre. This is a positive trend to be encouraged. More attention will need to be devoted to expanding membership, selling publications, and information provision activities.

Grant aided work

Overall in 2009-10 grant-aided work made a loss, which more than absorbed the surpluses from non-grant work. The consequence of reducing public funding is that competitive bidding is driving up the expected outcomes and driving down the price. In the past payments did not cover the overheads of maintaining a

Record Centre: less so now. For a charity to subsidise granted aided work is not sustainable, unless it has substantial other income.

Cash position

Although we ended the year with a positive cash position of c£12,500 this was barely adequate to meet the cash flow needs of the first quarter of the current year. To maintain a stable base the Trust needs a working capital of £20,000. There is an urgent need to promote the sale of our large stock of excellent guides and books.

Financial Outcome

There are a number of queries to be resolved before the final accounts will be available to members but the most likely outcome is a small loss or close to break-even. Income is approximately £60,000 for the year 2009-10

(2008-9 = £92,733, and 2007-8 = £121,510)

The Trust has survived, it is doing good work, but it must raise working capital to continue.

Recommendation

Members are invited to note that, expressed in financial terms, activity has dropped by a third in the past year, which is for the second year running and future prospects are not encouraging, whilst the scope for cutting Record Centre costs, already maintained on a minimum budget, is nil. Members are invited to authorise the Trustees to approve the accounts when they are completed, which will then be circulated to the membership.

5.1 Questions from the floor concerning the Treasurers Report:

Q. Dave Berry – what are the Trusts commercial services and can we charge more for them.

A. Mark Campbell – it is a matter of finding a balance between commercial and public benefit. As we are a charity we cannot 'profit' but can earn an income. We get much of the commercial work we do as we do not have the overheads of a commercial enterprise.

Comment: Jonny Merrick – GGT could provide a data service, such as desk studies for council services.

Comment: Mark Campbell – At present we cannot get council funding for the records centre, whereas the biodiversity records centre does.

Comment: Margaret Brown – We really lack core funding. Members could help by small donations as part of their subs, gift aided to allow GGT to claim extra value.

6. Chairmans Report:

Gloucestershire Geology Trust – Annual General Meeting 2010

Chairman's Report

I am glad to say that the Trust has forged on through 2010 with all the enthusiasm and drive that we have come to expect from our members and staff alike. The last 12 months have seen the continuation of several existing projects and the start of some new exciting ones.

This year the Trust contributed to the highly successful "Geofest" event held in the Abberly and Malvern Hills Geopark. In the Geopark we completed the third phase of work on the Huntley reserve, involving removing dangerous trees and improving access and interpretation. Further funding is being sought for another phase of maintenance and development work. We are still keenly looking for funding support for the Cotswold Hills Geopark, which is in need of development work.

During the year we completed a further 3 trails in West Gloucestershire meaning that the Trust has now produced a total of 19 trails in the Gloucestershire Uncovered series covering almost all areas of the county. We have allied this work with further Interpretation Boards in sites that are best suited. We have continued to

work closely with our neighbouring Trusts via the national "Geology Trusts" and have contributed to the sites monitoring scheme which all fits in with a national database project being run by Natural England.

We undertook a pilot to a pioneering project with the prisons service, providing Earth science education to inmates. This was most successful and we hope it will build into a bigger project in the next 12 months; we await the outcome of funding applications.

For the next few years, work will be intense on what has been a personal goal of mine since we founded the Trust. The definitive field guide to the geology of Gloucestershire. The title has still yet to be finalised but after a monumental amount of work currently being done by the large teams of experts we have now set up to write the text, we are hoping to publish in 2012. This will possibly become one of the Trusts most notable and best achievements.

The Trust has held position during the last 12 months financially, which is no mean feat in these difficult times. The climate for fund raising is not easy due to the downturn and the shadow of the Olympics. However we are competing well as great credit must go to the staff and our Treasurer for keeping money matters on an even keel.

Once again a big thanks go to the Geology Panel, who continue with the crucial work of monitoring and recording the geology of the county; they are the very backbone of the trusts existence. It goes without saying that I thank once again on behalf of all our members Dave, Hellen, Natasha and all the team at Brockworth for making the organisation work. They are a credit to themselves. A great deal of thanks also goes to the Board of Trustees who do the boring management stuff on Tuesday nights, well done to you all and please keep up the good work.

Finally to our members, thank you, for without a membership we might not exist. A sincere thanks to those who have made a commitment to the Trust by way of setting up standing orders for your subscriptions, and to those who have made extra donations throughout the year. We are most grateful. I hope you are content with what your trust has achieved over the last 12 months.

7. Election of Trustees / Directors

There were no new nominations and the existing members were happy to carry on, with the support of the membership.

Elected members of the Board of Trustees / Directors are:

Chairman	Mark Campbell
Treasurer	Prof. Peter Wilson
Trustees / Directors	Charles Pierce, Margaret Brown, Peter Lawrance, Mike Wynne.

8. AOB

None

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