



Minutes of the 21st AGM of the Constructed Wetland Association

Zoom, 10th November 2020, 10:00 am

MINUTES

1. Present:

Geoff Sweaney	Chair	Wetland Engineering
Helen Nicholls	Secretary	CWA/Global Wetland Technology
Andy Freeman	Treasurer	ARM
Matt Simpson		35percent
Gaby Dotro		Cranfield University
John Williams		University of Portsmouth
Catherine McIlwraith		The Rivers Trust
David Naismith		Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust
Stewart Moir		Moir Environmental

2. Welcome

Geoff welcomed everyone to the meeting.

3. Approval of minutes of last AGM

The minutes of the last AGM were approved.

4. Chairperson's report

Geoff gave an overview of the year's activities. Despite COVID and the cancellation of the 2020 conference, there have been some interesting developments including progress with a CWA-Rivers Trust partnership and the success of Gaby's NBS course of which the CWA is a partner. A joint CWA-Rivers Trust online conference with the theme of nature-based solutions is planned for 2021.

5. Treasurer's Report

Andy gave us an overview of the CWA's position. There are currently 22 members with a fair number still outstanding for 2020 and the bank balance stands at £4,200. The main expenses for the past year have been administration and the website.

6. Election of committee members and officers

It was unanimously agreed that to improve democracy and participation, posts should be held for 2 years only before coming up for election. The posts of Chair, Secretary and 6 committee members can be offered for re-election. The CWA constitution should be updated to reflect this, along with the changing membership criteria and benefits.

Helen will send an invitation to stand for election to all members from 2019-2020, although membership must be up-to-date in order to stand. Participants should include a short bio with their application. An online election will be held in December.

7. Any other business

The Catchment Based Approach

The [Catchment Based Approach](#) (CaBA) is a civil society-led initiative that works in partnership with government, local authorities, water companies and businesses to maximise the natural value of our environment. Matt Simpson has been attending CaBA meetings as a representative of the CWA and they have been looking at barriers to constructed wetlands, particularly for phosphorus removal. We are hoping that the push for better guidance and industry design standards will be fruitful and the CWA should participate.

CWA-Rivers Trust partnership

Ongoing discussions with the [Rivers Trust](#) (RT), who are also invested in CaBA, suggest there is a natural synergy between our organisations and we are keen to develop this. It is expected that the CWA will retain full independence; its own committee, hosting of the accreditation scheme, continuing with the annual conference and promoting wetland training. The RT will host CWA membership administration the CWA should benefit from RT investment in social media and marketing. The RT is putting together a memorandum of understanding and further details will follow. Geoff will follow this up with the RT.

CWA sites database

As data-use permissions were not required at the time, GDPR has made use of the current sites database difficult today. However, it was agreed that it would be beneficial for the project to be continued, perhaps as an interactive map of UK sites which would be a useful starting point for research and invaluable for CW promotion in general. It could hold little personal information; perhaps simply info on effluent treated, type of wetland and the postcode. The site could have inbuilt GDPR compliance by allowing constructors and operators to input data themselves. The committee will put a project proposal together and it will be an agenda point for the next workshop.

8. Review of the role and scope of the CWA

The accreditation scheme is currently appreciated as an industry standard by groups such as CaBA. It was agreed that interest for CWA corporate membership would grow through active promotion of the scheme. It is recognised that the CWA also represents wider groups beyond its individual and student membership. We feel that there are better opportunities for the CWA now than there have been for the past 5-6 years and hopefully, partnership with the RT will give a much-needed boost for us to capitalise on them.

CWA training and constructed wetland promotion

This is an area the CWA should certainly invest in. Cat will look into potential funding bodies (Esmée Fairbairn, etc) and we will prepare a bid to fund a p/t person to develop a training course, which would also be of interest to the RT. This will be a point for the next workshop agenda.

Connect and support members

The CWA could host another symposium at Wetpol 2021 in Austria where some of the sessions may be virtual (if not all...) There is also an SWS conference in the Camargue, France in June 2021 in which the CWA could participate.

We could promote Zoom chats between members and a couple of small webinars a year.

9. Arrangements for the next AGM

The 22nd AGM will be held on Zoom on 9th November 2021 at 10:00am UTC.

ACTIONS

Update the CWA constitution	All committee members
Invite members to stand for election	Helen
Organise the online election of committee members and officers	Helen
Chase memo of understanding with RT and conference plans	Geoff
Put a project proposal together to update the sites database	All committee members
Look into funding bodies to develop training	Cat