

## **Minutes of the 71<sup>st</sup> Annual General Meeting of the Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust**

**WWT Slimbridge Wetland Centre**

**Thursday 11 October 2018 at 10:30am**

**The following members of the Council were present, together with more than 90 WWT members and staff:**

Peter Day (Chairman), Martin Birch (Hon Treasurer), Barnaby Briggs, Simon Tonge and Andrew Beer.

In attendance: Martin Spray (Chief Executive).

The Chairman introduced himself and welcomed everyone to the 71<sup>st</sup> Annual General Meeting of the Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust (the Trust). He was delighted to see so many members in attendance in the Trust's 72<sup>nd</sup> year and so many familiar faces in what was a record turnout. He extended a special welcome to Dr Dafila Scott, Vice President, and also to Kate Humble, the Trust's new President.

### **1. President's welcome**

Kate stated what an honour it was to become the Trust's new President. She had been a Vice President for a long time and thought the organisation was extraordinary, constantly punching above its weight and doing amazing work, both in the UK and abroad. WWT was enormously well-respected, not just for Sir Peter Scott's legacy, but for its people and their extraordinary mix of skills, dedication, bravery and 'can do' attitude. Amazing successes had been achieved and she wanted to help get more recognition and support.

Membership support was vital and she was eager to harness the amazing enthusiasm and energy of members by being proactive, having more conversations, and providing an outlet for people's ideas to support centres and the whole organisation.

Kate conveyed how brilliant WWT was at providing education, and that education was fundamental for longevity to the organisation and the wild places people hold dear. Giving young people access to wetlands to get them excited and enthused was key, and that message needed to come across loud and clear.

The work of WWT had never been more relevant and changing weather patterns were creating flooding, drought and resulting flooding. Wetlands were beautiful places, good for wildlife and people, and a fantastic way of mitigating against some of those problems, which would inevitably continue if people did not change their behaviour.

Kate encouraged everyone to join together to ensure the work of WWT was championed and shouted about, urged members to get more people involved by buying them membership or days out, and to get children enthused in what a wonderful resource the Trust offered. She reiterated what a huge honour it was to take on the role and wished attendees an enjoyable day that she knew would prove what a special organisation the Trust was.

The Chairman thanked The President for an inspiring opening to the AGM.

**2. Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from the Trust's Patron, HRH The Prince of Wales, KG, KT, GCB, OM, AK, CD, QSO, PC; Vice President's The Duchess of Norfolk, Sir George Russell, Sir Bob Worcester and Mark Carwardine; and Trustees Pamela Castle OBE, Simon Henzell-Thomas and Prof. Alastair Driver.

**3. Minutes of the 70<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting held Thursday 5 October 2017**

Comments were invited on the minutes of the 70th Annual General Meeting held Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> October 2017. No comments were received. The minutes were proposed by Sue Alexander, seconded by John Bescoby and signed by the Chairman.

**4. Matters arising from the minutes**

There were no matters arising.

**5. Elections to Council**

The Chairman announced that after nine years of excellent service to Council, Anna Carragher had stepped down as a Trustee. The Trust had benefited hugely from Anna's presence on Council and she would be greatly missed.

Under Article 43a, The Chairman, Martin Birch and Pamela Castle, had all been re-elected for another three year term, and Alastair Driver and Barnaby Briggs were re-elected for a one year term following six years as Trustees.

Under Article 49, The Chairman was pleased to announce two new Vice Presidents; Mike Dilger, author, ecologist and television presenter; and David Lindo, author and well-known urban birder. The Chairman was delighted to have them both on board as ambassadors.

**6. To receive and consider the Report & Accounts of the Council for the year ending 31 March 2018 and the Report of the Auditors thereon**

**a) Chairman's Comments on the Report**

The Chairman presented the Report of Trustees for 2017-18. He emphasised that although it could not include everything, it made an excellent bedtime read, and he encouraged everyone to read it to understand the huge breadth of WWT's work and achievements. It had been an excellent year, both financially and organisationally.

The report presented WWT's mission, aims, and six ambitious goals for the world's wetlands by 2040, and for the first time, described nine programmes of conservation and support for members, providing a clear strategy for future work. The changes made over the past year had provided a firm foundation for the future and he felt privileged to be at the helm of a charity known nationally and internationally for its great work and which enjoyed an important reputation for punching above its weight.

WWT had been successful in its bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) in support of Slimbridge 2020, to transform the centre and enable Sir Peter Scott's house and heritage to become a publicly accessible living legacy. Signs of activity could already been seen around the reserve and work was well underway.

In terms of species conservation and community work, WWT was recognised internationally for its pioneering work to save species such as the Madagascar pochard and spoon-billed sandpiper from extinction, and also for its community based wetland programme. Closer to home, the experience gained from head starting successes, was directed towards the black-tailed godwit at Welney on the Ouse Washes and the iconic Curlew; highlighted as a subject in the latest edition of *Waterlife* which now comes in a fully recyclable wrapper. Great interest was shown in these initiatives, and for the working wetlands programme, which by enhancing the local environment for biodiversity,

demonstrated the amazing benefits of urban and community wetlands for wildlife and people.

The Trust was doing everything it could to enhance visitor experiences by providing people with close encounters with wetlands and wildlife and using creative resources to engage the public more so than ever. The Trust had broader horizons and aspirations for wetland conservation and community benefit than the public may perceive and was working hard to enhance its reputation.

The Consultancy business provided advice, practical guidance and management expertise to people across the globe. Their excellent abilities and skill set was recognised worldwide and enabled the team to support and contribute to the Trust's overall conservation strategy.

The Chairman stated that the success of the organisation was due to the quality and dedication of its people and he commended the highly talented and committed staff and marvellous team of volunteers, for all that had been achieved throughout the year. He also felt extremely fortunate to be supported by such an excellent team of Trustees, who provided a wealth of experience and expertise to the organisation and encouraged a culture of good decision making.

Fundraising went from strength to strength, and the Trust remained extremely grateful to supporters and businesses for their continued confidence, and especially for legacies which make a massive impact on what can be achieved. Long term planning for the health and protection of wetlands and the involvement of people would ensure the extraordinary legacy of Sir Peter Scott's work would be passed on to future generations.

The Chairman finished by thanking the members for their continued support, without which nothing would be possible.

#### **b) Hon Treasurer's comments on the Accounts**

The Hon Treasurer introduced himself and highlighted that it had been a successful summer for the breeding bird's programmes, from the Eurasian Cranes at Slimbridge, to the black-tailed godwits at Welney. Other successes included Slimbridge 2020, head-starting of more spoon-billed sandpipers, and an exciting new project to save curlews. Good financial management sat behind all of those, and it had been another year of strong financial performance. It remained his absolute pleasure to be part of Council, to provide the right balance of support and challenge to the leadership team, and to share some of the financial highlights from the accounts for financial year 2017-18.

Total income had increased to £24m, an increase of 7% on the previous year, and on a like for like basis, it was the Trust's highest ever income. The largest source of income came from membership subscriptions, which rose to just over £7m, and the Hon Treasurer thanked the members for their continued support.

Trading had dropped very slightly, to just below £5m, but given there were challenges facing the retail and catering industry, it was a solid result. As part of the ongoing investment programme across centres, a major refurbishment was undertaken of the Llanelli and London restaurants.

It was an exceptional year for legacies with £3.6m bequeathed. Rising legacy income was a trend being seen across the charities sector and one that the Trust was very grateful to have benefited from.

Overall, the number of members remained static at just over 210,000, visiting on average about three times per annum. Centres experienced over 950,000 visits from members and day visitors, plus almost 60,000 pupils and teachers on formal learning visits. In addition, there were approximately 50,000 visits to the wetlands at Steart Marshes.

Visitor experience was enhanced, with a range of new developments introduced across centres, including a new Boreal exhibit at Martin Mere and two new play spaces at Llanelli, and detailed plans were developed for major new exhibits at Arundel, and with the support HLF, at Slimbridge. Slimbridge 2020 will celebrate the life of Sir Peter Scott by opening his house to the public for the first time, and introducing new exhibits for

visitors to interact with conservation issues.

The Hon Treasurer commented that members were the bedrock of the Trust's success, from funding on-the-ground conservation work, to giving volume to its campaigning voice, which could not be achieved without them. There had been a slight decrease in member numbers over the year, and he urged members to introduce friends and family to membership; to tell people about the short-clawed otters and flamingos; and to pass on old copies of *Waterlife* to neighbours.

Rising income had meant that it was possible to increase expenditure in conservation programmes and at wetland centres, and approximately one quarter of income was spent on fundraising, or in the shops and restaurants. Around three-quarters was aimed at managing and maintaining the reserves and visitor infrastructure, but also on new investments, such as flood alleviation works at Arundel to help better protect wildlife from the risk of salt water intrusion. Work on the reserves contributed to local, regional and national biodiversity action plan targets.

The Trust continued to work with communities in Madagascar and Cambodia. In Madagascar, the team were working to establish sustainable management of the site and to reintroduce the Madagascar pochard, which was on the brink of extinction, and in Cambodia, the Trust was assessing the feasibility of promoting ecotourism on one of the last remaining grassland fragments there.

Work to save the spoon-billed sandpiper continued through the protection and management of coastal wetlands along their flyway. The Trust had been head-starting chicks since 2012 and another 30 birds were released in 2017.

Investment in advocacy work continued. The government's 25 year environment plan was strongly influenced by WWT's policy proposals and launched by the Prime Minister at London Wetland Centre following an influential visit by Michael Gove to Steart Marshes. The plan included a framework for setting new environment targets and drew heavily upon two WWT policy documents, *Nature's Way* and *Rich in Nature*. WWT also played a significant role leading negotiations on behalf of the environment sector with the government as it prepared to withdraw from the European Union.

The Hon Treasurer reported that the Council's reserves policy had sufficient funds set aside to cover essential expenditure for a period of up to six months as a contingency and was estimated at just below £7m. In terms of available reserves, the investment policy was reviewed and the investment portfolio moved to Rathbone Greenbank; a highly respected ethical investment firm; and in the process, the carbon impact of the Trusts' investments reduced by two thirds.

In the last year the Trust published modern slavery and gender pay gap statements for the first time. Carbon footprint reduced by a quarter, the first solar panels and an electric vehicle charging point were introduced, single use plastics were removed from restaurants, *Waterlife* magazine moved to a plant based biodegradable wrap, and 100% of electricity was purchased from renewable tariffs.

The Hon Treasurer thanked his Council colleagues, the leadership team and all the staff. The Trust employed a team of highly committed scientists, consultants, conservationists, animal breeders and lobbyists, supplemented by an extraordinary volunteer force, who provided hundreds of thousands of hours of volunteering over the year, by staffing the admissions desks, giving guided walks, helping in the back-office and carrying out front-line conservation work.

He extended a special thank you to the finance team, and to Nicola Spencer, Director of Finance and Support Services, who had left the Trust after 13 years to join the Marine Conservation Society. In Nicola's place, the Trust welcomed John Rew as Interim Finance Director, who had successfully steered the organisation through a clean audit.

The Hon Treasurer finished by commending the 2017-18 financial statements to the members, on behalf of Council.

**The receipt of the Report and Accounts was proposed by Norman Ridley and seconded by Veronica Fox. Members voted to accept receipt.**

**7. To re-appoint Messrs. Mazars of 90 Victoria Street, Bristol BS1 6DP, as auditors and to authorise Council to agree their remuneration**

**a) Auditor's comments**

No comments were received.

**b) Re-appointment of auditors**

Re-appointment of the auditors was proposed by Bob Brown, seconded by Peter Yeoman, and the vote was carried.

**8. Questions (raised with the Chairman prior to the meeting)**

Two questions were submitted by members prior to the meeting. The questions and responses are set out below.

• **Question from Bob Brown**

**Having recently read Feral by George Monbiot and Wilding by Isabella Tree I should like to ask a question related to the type of conservation that has no preferred end state and the goal driven frameworks of much conservation work. What can WWT learn from this approach?**

It's fantastic that the rewilding approach has a strong advocate in George Monbiot and a living demonstration in Isabella Tree's Knepp Estate, which is vast and, being in the south east of England, relatively accessible to politicians and the public alike.

Where there's the opportunity, WWT takes a rewilding approach. For instance, the salt marshes at WWT Steart have been naturally seeding with what the tide brings in since they were created four years ago. It is really exciting to find saltmarsh plants and fish naturally colonising the marshes and the creek system.

At Steart Marshes we're able to show the benefit to wildlife of restoring natural processes, alongside the benefits to people in terms of the protection from storm surges and locking up carbon.

However, under current circumstances it is not always possible or desirable to adopt a rewilding approach on the land we manage.

1. We manage land designated for wildlife conservation, such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). That land comes with statutory responsibility to achieve conservation targets. As a leading conservation NGO we have to set a good example and comply with the law.

Sadly it doesn't necessarily make for the best outcome because climate change is affecting us quickly and the designations don't keep up. For instance, here at Slimbridge we have to set aside a certain area for goose pasture because it is designated for the grazing geese. The geese no longer come in such numbers and in their place are golden plover and lapwing, which were not here before.

Our reserve management team do a brilliant job of being inventive with the space available, while also delivering what is expected. It's an imperfect system and where possible we push for sensible reform and provide real-life, on-the-ground testimony for how we'd like to see it improved.

2. Wildlife management struggles for space in lowland Britain. It has to compete for land against the pressure for housing and food production. It would be a big risk to stop managing some of the small areas that we manage for wildlife, because they are oases in the midst of a landscape that's intensively managed for other ends.

To combat this, we're exploring how we work with our neighbours throughout the catchments of our reserves so that we can restore a functioning waterscape within the managed landscape.

Professor Sir John Lawton's 2010 report for the government, 'Making Space for Nature', set out principles of more, better and joined up landscapes. WWT will continue to push for the UK administrations to live up to those principles, and in particular to encourage Defra to implement a 25 year plan that really works.

One extra benefit of setting conservation targets and planning management is the opportunity to engage people with a conservation story. It's about people who set out to achieve something and succeed or fail. There is also a story to tell with rewilding, but it's a slightly different story in that it's less structured. We feel we should take all opportunities to engage the public with our conservation work.

So under the current circumstances WWT will continue to employ a variety of approaches to managing our land and engaging people.

- **Question from Brian Bertram**

**Can you please tell us what are the perceived advantages and disadvantages of the (to me, misguided) suggested changing of the name and the logo of The Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust? I would be happy to expand on my concerns about it, but would like to hear the arguments first, and the results of the Members' survey in May.**

We have huge ambitions to grow support for wetland conservation for the benefit of both wildlife and people. Only a few weeks ago Ramsar reported that over a third of wetlands across the world have disappeared in the last 50 years – this is three times the loss of natural forest during this time. To enable us to realise those ambitions we need to reach out beyond our current supporters and convince many more people that wetlands are crucial to our existence. Our name is proving a huge stumbling block in achieving this for a number of reasons. For many years we have struggled with the word 'wildfowl'. It isn't well used or known in modern culture and it is frequently stumbled over on TV, radio and even when we are answering the telephone. In addition the acronym 'WWT' doesn't put the word 'wetland' front and centre of what we do. People frequently confuse it with WWF or the Wildlife Trust. We want to bring the word wetland into the mainstream of people's consciousness.

We're grateful to everyone who responded to our survey earlier this year on possible new names for us and the logo. We also surveyed all of our staff and volunteers as well as more than 2,000 people who do not yet support us. A range of views were put forward and the survey raised a lot of good points that all need to be carefully considered.

Discussions continue with Trustees and various external stakeholders, so we can't give any timescales for decisions at this point.

Brian commented that he was a tremendous supporter of the Trust and everything it was doing. He recalled a time in 1989 when an extra ordinary meeting was held with the membership to discuss a name change and the members voting 156 votes to 4 in favour of changing the name to Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust. He did not perceive the name to be a problem and would have liked to have seen an option in the survey to retain the existing name and logo. WWT did a

tremendous job of integrating wildfowl and wetlands, and he hoped it would continue to do so. The Chairman thanked Brian for his observations and assured him that his comments were duly noted.

Additional points raised are captured here:

- A radio advertising programme would be useful in communicating projects to the public. The Chief Executive noted that television and radio advertising was expensive, but agreed there was a lot more that could be done and would be done.
- Extreme care should be taken before changing the existing logo. It was both eye catching and memorable, which was quite difficult to achieve in corporate logos, and you could immediately see from looking at it that WWT is about water birds.
- The word 'Wildfowl' had shooting connotations and would it therefore be better to change the name to the 'Waterbird & Wetlands Trust'?
- Could 'Wildfowl' be substituted by 'World Wetland Trust'? There would not then be a need to change stationary etc. therefore reducing associated costs.
- Comments were not audible to certain parts of the room and microphones were needed.
- It had been difficult to find information about the AGM. The Chairman appreciated the feedback and stressed the need to ensure that everyone knew about the AGM, which would not be limited by space and a larger setting may be needed in future.

**A question was received from the floor, from Mr Ian Hepburn:**

- **We've had the benefit for the last half century of some pretty good wildlife legislation. Ramsar is coming up to its anniversary in a years' time and we've had 40 years of good species and water life protection through the European Union. We are in a process of change and I am interested to know whether the level of protection into sites and species is absolutely going to be transferred and covered in national legislation. A lot of interesting stuff is emerging but I am suspicious we will have a lesser level of protection for species and sites in the UK.**

The Chief Executive agreed that this was a very real fear and the current political situation had created uncertainty. Being part of a multi-state European community provided a lot more strength to environmental legislation and WWT would continue to push for a change in view and for an independent body outside of government to preside in the same way as a European Union in holding the government to account.

## **9. Long Service Award**

It was the Chairman's pleasure to announce that long service awards had been given to:

- Brian Morrell, Centre Manager at Caerlaverock, who was in attendance with his wife June. Brian joined the Trust as an Education Officer on 1 January 1993, and had completed 25 years' service.
- Mark Roberts, Aviculture Manager at Slimbridge, had completed 25 years' service. Mark started as a Warden on 23 May 1993 at the age of 20 and it was the Trust's opinion that Mark was one of the best aviculturists in the country.
- Peter Bullen, Health & Safety/Buildings Maintenance Officer at Martin Mere, started with the Trust on 4th October 1976 as a grounds assistant at the age of 16. Peter retired on 27th April 2018 having completed nearly 42 years' service.

- David Salmon, Legacy Manager at Slimbridge, started on 26th April 1971 at the age of 17. David retired on 31st May 2018 having completed 47 years' service.

Attendees acknowledged these incredible achievements with a round of applause.

## 10. Chief Executive's address

The Chief Executive welcomed everyone to the meeting and reiterated the remarks of the Chairman and the Treasurer, that the Report of Trustees for 2017-18 was a comprehensive report but could not cover everything, and he wanted to talk about where the organisation was heading and his aspirations for the future.

He had recently attended two events which had inspired this thinking. Firstly, The People's Walk for Wildlife, an event organised by Chris Packham, who was incredibly concerned about the decline in wildlife over the decades. It was not until looking back, that it was apparent to the Chief Executive just how much had changed. He recalled a time when he was running the Wildlife Trust and had taken his elderly mother to a small nature reserve covered in orchids and cowslips. She burst into tears as these meadows were prominent throughout her childhood in Hampshire, and not confined then to a small reserve. 10,000 people had taken part in the walk to hand in a manifesto to the Prime Minister. Some battles were being won, but not all, and declines were evident and growing.

The second event was at Oundle School in Peterborough, where he had been invited to join Vice President Sir David Attenborough and Dafila Scott at the opening of the new Scott House in honour of Sir Peter Scott's attendance there as a young boy. Sir David also addressed the students about the state of the natural world and highlighted that the choices people are making now are dangerous for the future. The excitement throughout the school at the prospect of Sir David's visit was phenomenal, and the strength of presentation Sir David made to the students was striking. The students will never forget that day and it was a tremendously powerful message for them to hear.

The Chief Executive went on to highlight that the latest State of Nature Report, produced by over fifty nature conservation organisations, reported that out of 8,000 species assessed between 1970 and 2013, 56% had declined and 15% were threatened with extinction in the UK. The State of the UK's Birds Report showed a large decline in Bewick's Swans, numbers of breeding birds was down by over 60%, and the UK was ranked 189 out of 218 nations in a biodiversity intactness assessment.

The Chief Executive expressed his concern for the situation and stressed how important it was for the conservation movement to continue doing everything it could to achieve results by making the natural world more relevant to people's lives. This had previously been brought home to him at a Natural Capital debate run by WWT Trustee Pamela Castle and a change in thinking was urgently needed to make a real difference. He referred to the Trust's conservation strategy, which was an ambitious plan, and achieving it would require WWT to be a global organisation and reach out to the public in a way it had never done before.

He spoke of the strategy's aims and the broad scope of work WWT planned to deliver over the coming five years to engage children and inspire and connect with people by relating wetlands to people's lives. Health and wellbeing was something that everyone in the world had as a common concern, and it was known that contact with nature helped mental health.

WWT would continue to work along the two big migratory flyways; the head starting work for the spoon-billed sandpiper had been remarkable and had helped to stabilise the population.



WWT was leading the way and the pioneering Flight of The Swans project had helped to highlight this more successfully than ever before.

In terms of policy work, WWT had played a significant role in influencing the Prime Minister Teresa May and Environment Secretary Michael Gove to launch the Government's 25 year plan for the environment at London Wetland Centre. WWT was getting better at persuading decision makers, and this was the start of WWT raising its influence on the political agenda.

WWT was elected as one of only two management positions on the East Asian Australasian Flyway Partnership, and as Chair of the Strategic Planning Task Force, he had led the production of a ten year strategic plan for the flyway. He had also co-hosted a workshop in Changshu, China, with the Chinese Government and Nanjing University on the subject of integrating urban development and wetland conservation. This had resulted in the decision to produce an urban wetland good practice handbook which he intended to present at the forthcoming Ramsar convention in Dubai.

The Chief Executive finished by highlighting that nearly 60,000 school children had visited over the year on formal learning visits. It was days like those in his younger days that stood out to him and he wanted WWT to be the stand out wetland conservation organisation in the world.

The Chairman thanked The Chief Executive for his motivational address, and stated that it was important that these messages were being heard by all.

## **11. Marsh Awards for Wetland Conservation 2018**

The Chief Executive introduced Peter Titley, Ambassador for the Marsh Christian Trust, to present the Marsh Awards for Wetland Conservation 2018.

Peter stated what a privilege it was to be in attendance and praised both The Hon Treasurer for his impressive presentation of the accounts, and The President for her enthusiastic welcoming remarks. He explained that The Marsh Christian Trust was founded in 1981 by its current Chairman, Brian Marsh OBE, with the sum of £75,000 of his own money. His original aim was to create a sustainable way to give something back to society, by supporting organisations and people who were making a difference. Today, this remained the organisation's aim; to celebrate the outstanding contributions of people who were committed to social, cultural and environmental causes; the people at the heart of the charity sector who voluntarily or professionally go the extra mile to make a difference. The Trust's activities were financed entirely by income derived from its investment portfolio, and aimed to create long-standing relationships with partners, supporting around 300 charities every year by making a large number of grants and offering over 80 different awards to individuals and groups from across the charity sector.

The Chief Executive echoed Peter's sentiments, stating what a great privilege it was to be able to work with the Marsh Christian Trust, and proceeded to announce the winners as follows.

- **Mark Smart – The Marsh Award for Wetland Conservation Achievement**

Mark had been managing wetlands for the RSPB for 25 years, 17 of which had been spent as site manager at Berney Marshes. The development work he had devised, designed and delivered had turned the site into one of the most important lowland wet grasslands in Europe supporting 300 pairs of breeding waders and 100,000 wintering waterfowl. This exceptional achievement had resulted from Mark's absolute dedication to conservation, his passion for breeding waders, his deep understanding of wetland management and the collaborations that he had built with landowners, conservationists, local authorities and scientists.

Peter proceeded to present Mark with the award. Mark thanked the Marsh Christian Trust and WWT, and accepted the award on behalf of the whole team, who had supported and inspired him in his work.

- **Colin Gray – The Marsh Award for Wetland Conservation Impact**

Fleet Pond Nature Reserve is Hampshire's largest freshwater lake. It is a Site of Special Scientific Interest and its margins are large areas of reedbeds. A few years ago the Pond began to be affected by silt washed down from nearby military land. The lake became very shallow and the water was extremely cloudy. The future of the reserve seemed doomed as the plant and animals in the Pond were dying and the local ecosystem was in serious decay.

Colin's determination led to him master-minding the Clearwater Campaign to highlight the issues, find the solutions and the funding to restore the Pond.

A short film was played to highlight Colin's achievements before Peter presented him with the award. Peter noted the film captured a lifetime of dedication and it was a great privilege to present the award.

Colin remarked that he had admired the work of WWT for a number of years and had used WWT's advisory service at Fleet Pond. He was glad to have persuaded the local authority to complete a survey when work first started on the pond, and grateful to be working so closely with them again with regard to an adjacent development of 1500 houses, to mitigate against any detrimental impact on the pond and wildlife. Fleet Pond was just a small reserve of around 140 acres but was the biggest lake in Hampshire and he was thankful for the award.

## 12. **Staff presentations**

Staff gave the following presentations:

- Steart Marshes & waterscapes by Alys Laver, Site Manager at WWT Steart Marshes, and Tim McGrath, Head of Working Wetland Landscapes,
- Mission Madagascar by Rob Shore, Head of Conservation Programmes,
- Slimbridge 2020 by Jackie Harris, Project Manager of Slimbridge 2020

The Chief Executive praised the team for their expertise, dedication and passion, which had come across so evidently throughout the morning.

## 13. **Chairman closes the meeting**

The Chairman thanked the speakers for their excellent talks and officially closed the meeting at 13:30.

