



# Norfolk and Norwich Naturalists' Society

Minutes of the 156th Annual General Meeting of the Society  
held at 7.30pm on 11th March 2025  
at St Andrew's Church Hall, Church Lane, Eaton, Norwich

***DRAFT – FOR APPROVAL AT 2026 AGM***

**Chair: Tony Leech**

**Treasurer: Ralph Wheeler**

**1. Welcome**

The Chair welcomed all members and counted 29 voting members, over the quorum of 25.

**2. Apologies**

Apologies were received from John Butcher, Sarah Butler, Francis Farrow, Sue Gale, Janet Higgins, Tony Irwin, Meg Miller and Jo Parmenter.

**3. Minutes of the AGM held on 26th March 2024**

The minutes of the last AGM were accepted as correct by the Chair, seconded by Nick Elsey and were unanimously approved.

**4. Matters arising from the previous minutes**

No matters were raised.

**5. Annual Report**

The Chair presented the report and advised the following:

- A copy of the annual report had been circulated to the members for whom email addresses were held and requested that anyone on email who was not receiving information, to inform the Membership Secretary.
- There were two errors in the report: Nick Elsey was omitted as a Trustee and 'Followers' on Facebook were referred to as 'Members'. Both of these were corrected in the final version to be filed with the Charity Commission.
- The Research Committee will increase the number of workshops offered, as they have proved very popular. As well as introductory subjects, entomology will be offered at a higher level and four workshops are proposed for early-career professionals.
- Imminent publications include Whales and Whaling in Norfolk by Carl Chapman and the latest edition of Transactions.
- A new membership database and later this year, a new website, are projects undertaken by IT professional, Alan Tindley, at no cost to the Society.

Lastly, the sad news of the passing of Rex Hancy was announced by the Chair. Rex was, along with his wife Barbara, awarded the Sydney Long medal in 2007. His obituary, written by Nick Elsey, will be published in Transactions.

Before voting on the annual report, the Treasurer presented the Annual Accounts.

**6. Treasurer's Report**

The Treasurer reported that the Examiner had approved the financial statement for 2024. Despite a £2500 increase in income compared to 2023, there is the possibility of a deficit of £7000 and is a priority for Council to tackle this year. The Society is grateful for all donations, particularly to the Sarnia Trust. The Treasurer thanked the Jim Froud for his help throughout the year.

Following the presentation of the treasurer's report, the Chair proposed voting to accept the Annual Report, which was passed unanimously.

**7. President of the Society for 2025/26**

As the new President, Ben was introduced as Professor of Evolutionary Biology and Science Engagement at the University of East Anglia. He is an author and broadcaster, and actively involved with many conservation and education organisations.

**8. Election of Officers for 2025/26**

The Chair thanked retiring Officers Francis Farrow and Jim Froud for their long-term service to the Society. Francis had served on Council since the mid-1990s and had agreed to continue as editor of Natterjack. In view of his contribution to Norfolk's natural history, Francis has been elected as a Vice President by Council. Jim fulfilled many roles for a decade, managing membership services, sales and the website. Hayley Strivens will take over as Membership Secretary, an unelected post allowing attendance at Council meetings as a non-voting member.

All nominees were unopposed and the election of officers *en bloc* was passed unanimously.

<b>Chair</b>	Tony Leech
<b>Secretary</b>	Rubyna Sheikh
<b>Treasurer</b>	Ralph Wheeler
<b>Assistant Treasurer</b>	Graham Moates
<b>Events &amp; Outreach Committee Chair</b>	Sarah Butler
<b>Events &amp; Outreach Committee Secretary</b>	Anne Edwards
<b>Finance Committee Chair</b>	Ralph Wheeler
<b>Finance Committee Secretary</b>	Graham Moates
<b>Liaison Committee Chair</b>	Carl Chapman
<b>Liaison Committee Secretary</b>	Sue Gale
<b>Publications Committee Chair</b>	Tony Leech
<b>Publications Committee Secretary</b>	Jo Parmenter
<b>Research Committee Chair</b>	Mark Welch
<b>Research Committee Secretary</b>	Janet Higgins

**9. Election of Council Members**

The Chair proposed Jeremy Bartlett to serve as a member of Council until March 2028. He was elected unanimously.

**10. Appointment of Independent Examiner**

The re-appointment of **Martyn Benstead** of Stephenson Smart was passed nem con.

**11. Any Other Business/questions from members**

Andy Gardiner asked why the turnout for the Tuesday evening meetings was so low when the Society had such a high membership. Nick Elsey suggested that older members may not want to drive in the cold, wet and/or dark; a sentiment echoed by many in the hall. Jim Froud noted that the daytime field trips used to attract 12-24 participants and now, average six per event. The Chair assured the meeting that the Events Committee would consider how these numbers might be improved.

The Chair closed the meeting at 8:15pm.

As the invited speaker was unavailable, Ben Garrod entertained the audience with an impromptu insight into his early career experiences.

Signed:

A. R. Leech, Chair

Date: