

COMBE MILL SOCIETY
Minutes of AGM 20 May 2022



Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Combe Mill Society held on Friday 20th May 2022 at 19:30 in the Foreman's Office at Combe Mill.

1 Members Present and Apologies

1.1 Attendees

The meeting was attended by Terry Bailey, Robin Bowl, Clive Brimson, Steve Foster (Chairman), Wendy Foster (Director), Derek Goddard (Director), Margaret Gruber (Director), Peter Hirst, Barry Horn, Gill Horn, Frank Huddleston, Brian Layt-Williams, Robin Long, Gordon Lord, Ray Pitts, Tony Simmons (Treasurer), Tony Thurlby, Peter Trowles (Secretary), Ann Winfield, Ron Winfield. Three further members attended by proxy.

1.2 Apologies

Geoff Cox, Nigel Evans, Philip Hawtin, Richard Newman, Steve Page, Doreen & Derek Turner.

2 Minutes of the 2021 AGM

The minutes of the 2021 AGM had been displayed on the members' page of the company's website and were received by the meeting.

3 Directors' Reports

3.1 Chairman's Report

The board's report to the meeting had been circulated to all members prior to the AGM. A copy of the full Report is appended to these minutes. The chairman presented the report to the meeting and in response to comments from the floor, proposed that communications within the Society could be improved by organising regular meetings of the Heads of Technical Areas. He also made special mention of Les Burford who for many years had role-played Edward Nash, Clerk-of-Works, on mill steaming days. He thanked Les's family for offering to lend the mill one of Les's model engines in his memory.

The chairman concluded by thanking his fellow directors and all the members who have worked on behalf of the mill during another difficult past year.

3.2 Treasurer's Report

The treasurer presented the following 2021-22 End of Year overview:

End of year overview

Our income was generated by:

Admissions	£ 7,297
Forge sales	£ 921
Tea Room sales	£ 7,922

Retail sales	£ 1,733
Room and Equipment Hire	£ 878
Experience Vouchers	£ 2,004
Donations	£ 912
Grants	£11,953
Members Subscriptions	£ 829
Sub total	£34,449
Other	£ 4,464
Total income	£38,913
Total Spend	£34,581
Surplus	£ 4,332

Headline figures

We began the year with a total balance of £27,246 (£15,533). (Figures in brackets are for financial year 2020-21.)

Because of COVID restrictions we did not start our open season until June 2021.

Our operating receipts for this financial year were £26,960 (£4,025) and we received COVID recovery grants of £11,953 (£20,674). Our operating cost was £34,581 (£12,662) – resulting in a surplus of £4,332 (£12,038).

We finished the year with a carry forward amount of £31,578 (£11,928).

To provide a little more detail, let's look at the **major cost categories**.

Fundraising activities generated £16,302 (£544) at a cost of £6,681 (£739). We had a surplus of £9,621 (-£195).

Receipts from the hire of rooms were £878 (£0). Sale of experience vouchers yielded £2,004 (£474).

Charitable activities – operating the Mill and demonstrating the forge and waterwheel raised £8,218 (£394) at a cost of £8,956 (£2,262) – a deficit of £738 (£1,868).

Any surplus is considered as contributing to the cost of upkeep, maintenance and administration. Within this figure for charitable activities is the cost of maintenance and project work costing £7,244 (£1,849).

Voluntary Income comprises membership fees, donations and grants. Our receipts from these were £13,779 (£22,580). Our volunteer costs consist of paying for sustenance and protective clothing, travel costs and publishing the newsletter. This cost £403 (£312).

We did not receive a Community Activities grant from WODC this year.

We recovered £409 (£1,045) in Gift Aid rebate as a result of membership subscriptions, donations and gift aided ticket sales.

Payments also relate to the governance of the Mill and comprise two parts – **upkeep** and **administration**. The cost of upkeep was £6,002 (£4,749) and the cost of administration was £6,268 (£4,598).

Under the heading of administration is the cost of PLI plus EL insurance, contents insurance and Directors and Officers cover.

We received 80% mandatory charity Council Tax Relief this year and an extended retail discount of 100% as a result of COVID support.

A majority of visitors now prefer to pay electronically and we have incurred fees from PayPal and Zettle of £168 during the year.

We began the financial year with a saving reserve of £10,500 in a Virgin Charity Savings account on which earned interest £13 (£52). Not satisfied with this return and needing to alter the named account holders we absorbed our savings reserve into our current account for several months, we then transferred £15,000 into the Redwood Bank to form our present reserve.

Attached is a receipts and payments summary of the last two financial years.

4 Appointment of Directors

Existing directors Derek Goddard, Margaret Gruber and Julie Stuart-Thompson retired by rotation. Derek Goddard and Margaret Gruber offered themselves for re-election and the board had supported their re-election. The chairman reported the results of the poll and declared that Margaret and Derek had been duly re-elected.

5 Any other business

Brian Layt-Williams supported the proposal for meetings of the HTAs to keep them better informed about what is happening at the mill. He asked if the newsletter could also do more in that regard.

Clive Brimson mentioned that establishing the availability of volunteers was key to the successful planning of group visits outside normal opening times. He also suggested that it be made easier for group visitors to leave their email addresses so that the mill could keep in touch with them. The visitors book could be made more prominent to help with this.

The meeting closed at 8:07 p.m.

Peter Trowles
Charity Secretary

Chairman's Report for 2021 – 2022

Introduction

I am a local, born in Minster Lovell and have lived in Witney all my life. I spent many years working in the County Council Grounds department and as such made many trips to Blenheim Saw Mill for supplies when it was still run by Combe Mill. I have been a member of the Combe Mill Society for two years and have gradually become more involved especially since taking on the running of the Tea Room. I am fascinated by the history of the Mill and have tremendous respect for the volunteers who so freely share their knowledge and expertise.

I took over as chairman in November 2021 from Philip Hawtin. At this time the Mill was closed to the public for the winter period.

My first priority was to go through a large list of winter projects that had been identified by the HTAs to get them approved by the board. It is vital that we continue to operate a schedule of improvements to the mill in order to preserve it for the future. We are also in the preliminary stages of applying for museum status and this will form the basis for future action planning.

I have been impressed by the dedicated work which our Heritage Committee do in preserving our own exhibits at the Mill.

Meanwhile we have embarked on a review of policies, risk assessments and procedures so that all our documentation is brought up to date and published on the website.

For the past year everything has been overshadowed by Covid restrictions and I see this now as a time where we can move forward.

Key Issues for the year 2021-22

1. The Christmas Fair was hailed as a tremendous success despite being organised at relatively short notice with many stall holders pledging to return.
2. As far as the Mill is concerned, the river pump has been a major issue this year. The first effort was to have the pump repaired by Algar Electric Motors and they had given a quote for this which the Board accepted as the cheapest option. The pump was removed from the river and taken to Algar who had it in their possession for several months. It was only in February when Peter Trowles started chasing them up that Algar realised that they could not in fact repair it. This meant that valuable time was lost and Derek Goddard then spent time researching and contacting Xylem water systems. The proposal was presented to the Board who agreed that the only course of action was to purchase a new pump. As of this week the pump is now at the Mill ready to be installed in the river. Once the pump is in place then it is hoped

to get the pump and hence the water wheel running as soon as water levels allow. This has been a tremendous effort of team work by the Wednesday volunteers.

3. The project list compiled for completion during the winter months is making good progress with a repainted tea room, a big tidy up in the workshop area with scrubbing and cleaning by Margaret Gruber, replacement of decking boards along the front of the tearoom and pollarding and replacement of the willow fencing around the picnic area. There have been many other painting and maintenance tasks with some still ongoing. Thanks again for all the hard work.
4. Prior to our first Open day we held a volunteer briefing which focused on Health and Safety Procedures on Open days and discussed fire drills, safety and procedures and also Safeguarding. Volunteers will complete Fire marshal training and a revised Safeguarding policy was approved by the board.
5. The first steaming day of the year focused on volunteer recruitment and there was a good turn out with a great start to takings for the year and several interested volunteers. We also had a visit by John Wood representing the Engineering Heritage Committee. He had come to assess the Mill against our bid for Heritage Status which had been applied for a while ago pre Covid. We have also been accepted as members of the Industrial Heritage Network.
6. Educational visits have restarted with a successful visit by the Europa School at Culham on two days. We have also worked in partnership with the Evenlode River Project who have started a two-year project and river study in conjunction with Thames Water. Several day visits are booked in over the next couple of months with groups from U3A and Historical societies coming to the mill and sampling our ever-popular cream teas.
7. The Blacksmiths continue to do a magnificent job with a long list of Blacksmith experiences having been sold and many happy apprentice Blacksmiths for a day. They have also spent a lot of time cleaning and restoring the bellows.
8. Our Easter weekend activities included an Easter Egg Hunt, a quiz and painting activities for children. These also ran over the Easter Weekend along with our STEM steaming day which proved very successful. School holiday activities are beginning to attract an increasing number of families to the Mill.
9. Last week we were visited by a BBC film crew who were making a Countryfile episode featuring Apprenticeships, specifically at Blenheim. They interviewed Peter Trowles about the workers of the Mill and how their families were also employed some taking apprenticeships. The programme will be aired mid-May.

Volunteers

We have been lucky enough to attract some new volunteers to the Mill in the past year, notably Keith Johnson whose great grandfather had done work on our water wheel for the Duke of Marlborough. He has been able to lend us the ledgers and documents relating to the water wheel.

Directors

At the end of the 2022 AGM, Derek Goddard and Margaret Gruber retire by rotation and we have sadly received the resignation from the board by Julie Stuart Thompson. I would like to thank her on behalf of the Society for her dedication and hard work and am pleased to report that she will continue to help with steaming event stalls. Derek and Margaret are happy to stand for re-election to the board. Philip Hawtin continues to recover from his fall and we hope to see him back at the Mill soon.

Thanks

As Chair, I would like to extend my thanks to all of the members and volunteers who help to keep the Mill running every week and on Steaming days. Without them we would not be able to keep going and have been very grateful to those who have kept up the maintenance programme throughout the pandemic. Thanks especially to Richard Newman for the amazing job he does handling bookings amongst the other roles he carries out!

We also thank Tony Simmons for the splendid job he does looking after the Mill's finances. We have benefited from Covid grants during the pandemic.

Also, a big thank you to Peter who makes a splendid job with our minutes from board meetings.

Thanks to all the members who organize the themed events for our steaming days to make them the success they are

We remember Les Burford with sadness, particularly in his role as Edward Nash and thank his family for the offer of a loan item from his collection in his memory. The Heritage committee is currently completing the formalities.

Finally, I would like to thank you all for the support and tolerance which you have shown me in the past 7 months since I became Chair.

Steve Foster

May 2022

Treasurer's Report 2021/2022



COMBE MILL SOCIETY Receipts and Payments Account

	<u>Y/e 2022</u>		<u>Y/e 2021</u>	
Balance at 1 April		B/F	£ 27,245.90	B/F
Lloyds Bank	£	16,235.79		£ 4,454.30
Savings Reserve	£	10,500.00		£ 10,500.00
Petty Cash	£	510.11		£ 359.57
Receipts				
<u>Fund Generation</u>				
Refreshment Sales	£	7,921.58		
Retail sales	£	1,732.65	£	69.50
Souvenir Brochure Sales	£	68.00		
Sales of Donated Items	£	964.90		
Other Sales	£	28.00		
BBQ Sales	£	1,757.51		
Market proceeds	£	392.00		
Grand Draw receipts	£	556.00		
Hire of Rooms + Equipment	£	877.50		
Experience Vouchers	£	2,004.10	£	474.00
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<u>Charitable Activity Income</u>			£ 16,302.24	£ 543.50
Admissions	£	7,297.34	£	137.00
Forge Sales	£	920.50	£	257.00
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			£ 8,217.84	£ 394.00

Treasurer's Report 2021/2022



Other receipts

Sundry receipts	£	68.67		£	14.00
Refunds on Purchases	£	14.90		£	14.45
Easy Fundraising + Smile	£	108.99		£	57.67
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Voluntary Income

			£	192.56		£	86.12
Member Subscriptions	£	829.00			£	835.00	
Donations	£	911.88			£	1,000.00	
Grants Received	£	11,952.78			£	20,674.63	
Hardcopy newsletter premium	£	85.00			£	70.00	
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Tax Rebates

			£	13,778.66		£	22,579.63
Gift Aid Refund	£	409.08			£	1,044.76	
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Loans received

			£	409.08		£	1,044.76
Loans from supporters	£	-			£	-	
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Interest Received

			£	-		£	-
Savings Reserve account	£	12.90			£	51.59	
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			£	12.90		£	51.59
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Operating Receipts

			£	38,913.28		£	4,699.60
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			£	66,159.18		£	24,699.60
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Treasurer's Report 2021/2022



Payments

Voluntary Income Costs

Sustenance & protective clothing	£	290.17	£	163.39
Volunteer travel costs	£	2.10		
Postage Newsletter	£	110.88	£	148.92

Fundraising Sales Costs

		£	403.15		£	312.31
Tea Room Supplies	£	2,270.15				
Fuel for Barn Engines	£	60.98				
Flyers/Brochures/Posters	£	1,086.46		£	90.00	
Payment for visiting attraction	£	399.88				
Retail Supplies	£	837.42		£	333.97	
BBQ Supplies	£	798.37				
Market Costs	£	362.32				
Advertising	£	344.72				
Web Site hosting and support	£	361.02		£	315.44	
Return of booking deposit	£	160.00				

£ 6,681.32

£ 739.41

Governance - Upkeep

Telephone/broadband	£	466.32	£	508.95
ZOOM Fees	£	172.68	£	100.73
Rent	£	138.42	£	138.42
Rates	£	65.34	£	-
Water	£	87.37	£	25.17
Electricity	£	2,049.19	£	1,563.80
Fire Extinguisher/Alarm Service	£	1,287.00	£	658.68
Boiler Inspection Fee	£	200.00	£	200.00
Cleaning (incl materials)	£	953.10	£	992.44
Lift Service Contract	£	288.00	£	270.00

Treasurer's Report 2021/2022



Waste collection charge	£	294.90	£	290.42

Charitable Activities			£ 6,002.32	£ 4,748.61
Fuel Oil for Boiler	£	797.95		
Consumables for Boiler	£	168.17	£	254.29
Consumables for Forge	£	651.85	£	112.82
Maintenance of Premises	£	4,614.21	£	1,061.30
Maintenance of Displays	£	627.10	£	-
Maintenance of Equipment	£	1,431.93	£	267.04
Maintenance of Boiler	£	61.55	£	430.38
Materials for Waterwheel Project	£	509.39	£	100.00
Learning Resources	£	-	£	8.83
Training Costs	£	-	£	110.00
Interpretation	£	93.99	£	26.72

Governance - Admin			£ 8,956.14	£ 2,371.38
Printing Admin Related			£	-
Stationery	£	1,530.29	£	470.53
Reference book or publication	£	-	£	-
Postage Advertising	£	-	£	-
Postage Admin + Fundraising Related	£	60.70	£	17.79
Computer supplies	£	-	£	-
Subscriptions for Other Bodies	£	600.80	£	353.00
Insurance - Public Liability/EL/PL	£	2,278.49	£	2,273.35
Directors & Officer Insurance	£	256.66	£	163.30
Legal Fees	£	-	£	-
Accountancy Fees	£	1,343.00	£	1,320.00
Museum Accreditation costs	£	198.51	£	-

			£ 6,268.45	£ 4,597.97

Treasurer's Report 2021/2022



<u>Finance charges</u>				
PayPal+Zettle Fees	£	168.10		£ 1.45
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<u>Assets purchased</u>			£ 168.10	£ 1.45
Plant and machinery	£	6,110.89		£ -
Furniture	£	159.00		£ -
		-----		-----
<u>Loan repayments</u>			£ 6,269.89	£ -
Loan repayments	£	-		£ -
		-----		-----
			£	£ -
			£ 34,581.27	£ 12,771.13
			£ 31,577.91	£ 1,928.47
Balance at 31 March				
Lloyds Bank	£	14,740.15		£ 16,235.79
Savings Reserve	£	15,000.00		£ 10,500.00
Petty Cash	£	1,718.18		£ 510.11
	£	31,458.33		£ 27,245.90
<i>Unaudited</i>				