



21st August 2020

Dear SHS Members

We hope this finds you well and enjoying the summer. It's been a while since we were last in touch. June and July were busy months preparing for our AGM alongside our regular planning work.

Many thanks to those of you who wrote letters of objection to the District Council regarding the proposed barn to be built next to Ilton Copse (Malborough parish, ref: 1770/20/FUL) where the tree felling took place earlier this year – we await news of that planning decision.

Now we've had the AGM it is time to move forward again, which is just as well as things have got rather busy! As well as our day-to-day work, the Society is keen to provide a voice for its members on issues which concern us. The Government has recently issued public consultations on two issues very close to our hearts – trees and the planning system – and we plan to respond to both, more below.

SOUTH HAMS SOCIETY AGM: First I would like to thank all of you who took the time to vote for those who stood as SHS Trustees and Committee members, and also to provide feedback on the proposed amendments to the Society's Constitution. We do appreciate it. The outcomes of both votes were confirmed at the AGM which thankfully (due to some last minute ringing round!) was quorate. We are grateful to all those who attended the online AGM, via Zoom, and hope you found it interesting. I am pleased to say that the Constitution amendments were passed by a good majority. In terms of the election, the result was as follows:

Chair – position vacant

Vice Chair (and trustee) – Didi Alayli

Secretary – position vacant

Treasurer (and trustee) – Debbie Board

Membership & Events (and trustee) – Lynne Bentley

Planning Co-ordinator (and committee member) – Leslie Pengelly

Trustee – Cathy Koo.

Following a Committee meeting this week, I am delighted to say that two further Committee members have come on board – Sarah Linton, who will focus on external relations, and Penny Fenton, a long-standing and valued member who has organised our beach cleans for many years. The search for a new Chair for the Society continues.

Thanks again to our AGM speaker, Thelma Rumsey, Secretary of the South Hams Tree Warden Network. It was very heartening to hear about the 'Saving Devon's Treescapes' project which has south Devon (Salcombe and West Alvington) as one of its focus areas. Further information online at:

<https://www.devonwildlifetrust.org/what-we-do/our-projects/saving-devons-treescapes>

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It was also noted that local Tree Warden vacancies exist in – Buckland-Tout-Saints, Charleton, South Huish, South Milton and West Alvington. Anyone interested in finding out more should contact Thelma direct on – thelmainkingston@gmail.com.

Nicky Fox, the Society's previous Membership Secretary, has kindly written up the draft Minutes of the AGM, for formal approval at the next AGM. If anyone would like a copy please let me know.

England Tree Strategy: You may be aware that the Government has committed to drawing up a Tree Strategy for England. To help shape this, DEFRA (the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) has issued a public consultation which consists of an online questionnaire of some forty plus questions:

<https://consult.defra.gov.uk/forestry/england-tree-strategy/>

We encourage you all to respond. Some of the questions are quite technical but many are common sense. For those who don't wish to respond to the full DEFRA questionnaire, the Society is offering you the option to focus on just ten key questions, the answers to which will be collated into a response and submitted online in the name of the South Hams Society. Please see the document attached.

Andrew Northrop, who is a member and a local Tree Warden, has kindly offered to collate any comments received. You can either type your answers into the document provided (it is in Word) and e-mail that to Andrew, or you can print the document, hand write your answers (legibly please!) and send those to him by post to his home address which is on the bottom of the form.

Whether you decide to respond in full (online) or partially via us, we do hope you will take this opportunity to respond to the consultation.

England planning shake-up: Fortunately the Government consultation on the White Paper "Planning for the Future" has a longer deadline – 29th October.

You may well have read articles in the press about the plans. We found this interesting one:

<https://eastdevonwatch.org/2020/08/09/western-morning-news-planning-shake-up-puts-developers-in-charge/>

Given the Society's very strong interest in planning, we intend to respond to this consultation. For further information see: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/planning-for-the-future>

We look forward to you getting involved in the England Tree Strategy consultation – any questions, please ask - and we hope you enjoy the rest of the summer.

Best wishes – Didi

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