

**Countryside Management Association**  
**Annual General Meeting 2018**  
**5pm Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> November 2018**  
**Lee Valley YHA, Cheshunt, Hertfordshire**



## **Minutes**

### ***Present:***

Board Members: Linda Nunn (Chair), Mark Baker (Secretary), Dave Solly

National Committee: Ian Brooker (International Rep), Toby Edwards (Northern Ireland), Tim Russell (South West), Richard Westwood (South East), Tom Heenan (East of England), Colin Houston (Greater London).

Roger Cole (Hon Vice President)

CMA Members present: (see attached Delegate List, appendix 1)

Also: Rachel Limb (CMA Admin Support)

***Apologies:*** Alan Preece, Chris Lockyer

### **1. Welcome**

Chair Linda Nunn (LN) welcomed members to the AGM and thanked everyone for attending. Thanks were given to Lee Valley Regional Park Authority for their time and support in organising the Conference Field Trips.

The Chair introduced Mark Baker, previously Vice Chair, as the CMA's new Secretary and Dave Solly.

The Chair noted apologies from Treasurer Alan Preece who is attending a major conference in the Wyre Forest on behalf of the CMA, CMA Honorary Patron Chris Baines will also be at the event.

### **2. Annual Report (inc Treasurer's Report) - attached as Appendix 2**

Mark Baker (MB) thanked LN her part of the Annual Report (circulated prior to the meeting) and for all the work she has put in. MB also thanked Alan Preece (Treasurer) for his report (included in the Annual Report) and his predecessor in the Secretary role, Steve Scoffin, both of whom had battled with HMRC to recover fines incurred erroneously.

MB noted that Janice Burley, currently National Training Co-ordinator, would be stepping down from the role shortly. She has undertaken this role for the last two years and MB thanked her on behalf of CMA. If any member is interested in taken on a training role, please get in touch.

Thanks were also given to Ian Brooker and Roger Cole for their roles internationally and to all the Regional Co-ordinators for their work across the UK and contributions to the Annual Report.

MB outlined the intention to produce and circulate the annual report in April each year in future, reporting on the financial year that has just ended, at a time when it will all be fresh in people's minds.

MB asked if there were any questions arising from the Annual Report or Financial Report, there were no questions from the floor.

### **3. Regional Updates**

LN noted that regional updates had been provided by the Regional Co-ordinators and were included in the Annual Report. However some regions had not been able to provide a written report, those present at the AGM were invited to update verbally:

#### ***SW - Tim Russell (TR)***

- Thanks to LN, the South West now has a Dorset Representative (Clive Whitbourn, NT)
- SW Regional Committee has had a number of regular ranger meetings
- Emma Jones, the editor of the South West newsletter "Sou'Wester" has moved roles and is now with the NT at Killerton. As a result the latest edition has been a little delayed but will be out shortly
- They have had excellent turnout for meetings
- Good study day the previous week to Avalon Marshes, a partnership and re-wilding project (NE, NT, WT and Env Agency), which is home to  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the UK population of bitterns, as well as marsh harriers and egrets
- Study days are going well, with another one scheduled at Durlston Country Park in Dorset in early December
- New members continuing to join and TR thanked all who are helping to keep the region buzzing.

LN welcomed Colin Houston as the Regional Co-ordinator for the Greater London area.

### **4. CMA Board Directors**

MB reported that as part of his new role as Secretary he has revisited the CMA's Articles of Association, these are a bit of a minefield so he has sought expert advice on what needs to be done in terms of the Board and election of Directors.

If the current Board members recommend someone for election, they can be elected at the AGM (if quorate) by majority vote.

Roger Cole enquired whether or not any of the existing Board members were retiring - MB confirmed that two are retiring, but two people would be standing for election to replace these, though additional Board members would be very welcome.

Members voted on the proposal to elect Phil Bolton and Steve Peach to the Board, these motions were carried and Phil Bolton and Steve Peach duly elected as Directors.

LN thanked the two retiring members, Sarah Gibbs and Dave Solly, for all their hard work on behalf of the Association. MB confirmed that having reviewed the Articles of Association Board Members can only serve for a maximum of 6 continuous years, though

it is possible they may be re-elected again in subsequent years, having stood down for one year.

It is important that the CMA adheres to its Articles of Association; MB will continue to review these and explore any better, or more appropriate, constitutional models.

## **5. News Update**

LN pointed members to the Annual Report circulated prior to the meeting for news.

## **6. Accreditation Review**

LN reminded the meeting that a year ago it had been decided that the Association's Accreditation Scheme be reviewed to ensure it was fit for purpose and met the needs of the membership.

A crucial part of this review was looking at the framework of competencies, as the demands of the job have changed since the scheme was set up.

To assist with the process the Board sought someone who understands the process and issues, but is not too close to the organisation for objectivity. LN apologised for the delay and explained that as all on the Board are volunteers the process has taken a while.

For context LN reminded members that an Accreditation Review Group, which includes Tom Heenan, Toby Edwards, Clair Payne, Dave Solly, Matt Axford and Phil Bolton, has met and discussed how the Accreditation Scheme could be improved. A member's survey was undertaken, for both accredited and non-accredited members, and a big thank you to all who contributed to that.

There is a strong feeling that an accreditation scheme is still wanted - but a further survey may be needed to dig deeper into how this might work and what it might contain.

With a mind to keeping the review objective, a decision was made to put the project out to a consultant. A brief was sent to 3 candidates, but all 3 replied to say they were unable to do the work. One then came back indicating that they could assist and following a meeting, has prepared a direction of travel paper.

The Board and Accreditation Review Group have carefully considered this paper and have decided that they do not wish to pursue this. The consultant was focussing on accredited training, rather than an accreditation system for CMA Members. This is something CMA may wish to pursue in future, but just not at this point.

What the CMA requires is a revised, refreshed framework of competencies. The consultant had set out how they would do the review and this would include a lot of people's time through a series of groups - given the hours people work it is difficult to see how this would have been achieved. In addition the fee was very high.

The Accreditation Review Group need to have a further think about what is needed, Dave Solly suggested looking again at LANTRA to see if anyone there might be willing to assist.

LN apologised to members for the false start and delay with the review.

Roger Cole (RC) noted that the ERF are looking at Ranger competencies and mentioned the IUCN competencies. LN stated she has a copy.

The accreditation system operated by SCRA was also noted and their Chair, George Potts, agreed to put LN in touch with their contact.

## **7. AOB/Questions**

RC reminded members of a number of opportunities coming up for international courses; Swiss Rangers are offering a Heritage Interpretation Seminar in April 2019 (over 6 days) and in July/August Israeli Rangers are running an anti-poaching management programme (one week).

RC also noted that World Ranger Congress will be taking place in Nepal in November 2019 and the next European Ranger Conference will be in the Bavarian Forest in May 2020.

Details of these are on the CMA website.

***Meeting closed at 5.30pm***

## Appendix 1: Conference Delegate List

(Please note that not all conference delegates were present at the AGM)

First Name	Surname	Company/Organisation
Mark	Baker	Devon County Council
Phil	Bolton	Wildthing Consultants
Ian	Brooker	Dartmoor National Park Authority
Roger	Cole	CMA Honorary Vice President
Toby	Edwards	National Trust
Derek	Evans	Lee Valley Regional Park Authority
James	Fleetwood	The Conservation Volunteers
Neil	Fryer	The States of Jersey
Jasper	Gallagher	National Trust
Emma	Goodwin	National Trust
Jason	Goodwin	National Trust
Gemma	Gregory	Derbyshire County Council
Chris	Harris	
Tom	Heenan	Essex County Council
Matthew	Hewes	Norwich City Council
Colin	Houston	City of London Open Spaces
Christopher	Lockyer	National Trust
Keiran	Luce	The States of Jersey
Matthew	McGettigan	Essex Wildlife Trust
Julia	Meldrum	The States of Jersey
George	Mist	Retired, CMA Life Member
Linda	Nunn	Cranborne Chase AONB
Alison	O'Connor	London Wildlife Trust
Steve	Peach	Hampshire County Council
Marie-Anne	Phillips	Bracknell Forest Council
George	Potts	SCRA
Tim	Russell	Devon Wildlife Trust
Ellen	Shields	Norwich City Council
Helen	Sibley	South Norfolk Council
Dave	Solly	Natural England
Nick	Stanley	Thurrock Council
William	Stewart	Norwich City Council
Michelle	Tyrtania	Coventry City Council
Nadia	Ward	London Wildlife Trust
Richard	Westwood	Bracknell Forest Council
Joe	Williams	National Trust
Chris	Young	Norwich City Council
Richard	Young	National Trust

**PLEASE NOTE:** The AGM will be conducted on the basis that members have had the opportunity to read this Annual Report prior to the meeting. Members will not be taken through the document at the AGM, but the Board will take any questions arising from it.

## 2017 / 18 Annual Report

### Chairman's Report

As another very busy CMA year closes, I'd like to start by offering my sincere thanks to each and every member across the land, including our very supportive corporate members. You all spend valuable time and effort on CMA 'business' in whatever form that takes, whether it's organising and attending training/study days, holding regional meetings, compiling or reading regional newsletters, writing articles for the Ranger magazine or responding to surveys sent out to you. You are CMA and long may it thrive and prosper through, and for, its members. Special thanks must go to your Board and National Committee for giving significant volunteer time to making things happen throughout the year; to Rachel Limb who valiantly strives to keep us organised, to Liz Bourne for putting together packed Ranger editions and the Countryside Jobs Service (CJS) for their ongoing sponsorship package. I will refrain from thanking anyone else by name, as I would doubtless miss someone out; such is the tremendous input CMA receives across the breath of the land.

2018 so far has been a year of government announcements, publications and consultations. 'A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment' and 'Health and Harmony; the future for food, farming and the environment in a Green Brexit' consultation give us all much to reflect on and consider, with Agriculture and Environment Acts to follow. As potentially 'once in a lifetime' changes, I'd urge members and colleagues to look for opportunities to put our profession centre stage. I might suggest that your wide-ranging knowledge and experience could be in considerable demand as the future unfolds...

Beginning in late 2017, the work of the Parks Action Group remains ongoing, looking at how public parks and green spaces can meet the needs of communities now and in the future; another opportunity for CMA to positively input to changing scenarios.

Related to all the above, I'd like to give special mention to the Accreditation Review. Responding directly to your survey responses on the issue, the Accreditation Review Group and the Board continue to work diligently, to offer a revised, up-to-date, fit for purpose accreditation system that both you, and employers, will value. This is a vitally important piece of work, albeit taking longer than we all hoped. Rest assured that everyone involved wants to offer you a thoroughly and comprehensively reviewed system that is respected both within, and outside, our profession. Please bear with us, whilst progress is made; 'if it's worth doing, it's worth doing well'.

Last but not least, links to colleagues in the European and International Ranger Federations remain very strong. This ongoing connection to colleagues across the world is something to be

proud of. Not all associations or organisations have this global element to their work and CMA continues to play a strong role in this 'World Family of Rangers', supporting our colleagues whenever possible.

A sincere 'thank you' again to all those who work hard behind the scenes in different roles, on behalf of members and those who are constantly raising awareness of CMA. I know of sterling work both north and south of the country with members giving a number of presentations to college students and ranger colleagues during 2017/18 and I have every confidence that CMA will continue to grow in both size and influence.

**Linda Nunn, 7<sup>th</sup> November 20**

## **Secretary's Report**

Whilst I was not the Secretary for this reporting period, I was a board member and so can briefly summarise a few key matters. Firstly I'd like to thank my predecessor in this role, Steve Scoffin, who put in a great deal of effort particularly in the earlier stages of our ongoing problems with HMRC.

I'd also like to say a huge thank you to our Admin Contractor, Rachel Limb, who has worked tirelessly to bring our admin systems and processes up to scratch and who provides a great service to the board and to members.

One of the key projects that Rachel and I worked on during this reporting period was the adoption of Webcollect as our new online membership admin system. We are delighted with the new system, which makes it far easier for people to join the Association and to renew their memberships; whilst at the same time minimising the quantity of data entry and admin time required by the CMA to manage memberships. The fact that the introduction ran so smoothly was entirely down the Rachel's willingness to learn her way around the system and deal with any glitches promptly.

Membership levels during this period has held steady around the mid-400s (it's difficult to state exact numbers at year end as this is also the renewal period for a large proportion of members and there are often some who delay renewing or don't renew). As of early November 2018 we have 454 individual members and 15 corporate members.

Starting from April 2019, our plan is to compile the annual report in April each year and share it with members then. A further update will be provided to attendees at the AGM in the autumn. That we won't be struggling to recall what happened up to a year and a half ago and the report should be of more relevance and interest to members as it will cover a more recent time period.

**Mark Baker, 27<sup>th</sup> October 2018**

## Treasurer's Report

This year has again seen a much more settled financial position. Our finances have now stabilised and we can hopefully plan for some strategic spend on larger projects to move CMA further forward. Again a huge thank you to Rachel Limb, admin support, who has been very efficient and speedy in processing our book keeping which has made my life so much easier.

Last year we made a pre-tax surplus of £1,945.12. Our likely tax bill (theoretically £369.57 at 19%) is likely to be less, as it should be offset against historic losses.

Balances	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2017	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2018
Current	£10,229.35	£8,881.37
Reserve	£1,706.90	£5,000
Total	<b>£11,936.25</b>	<b>£13,881.37</b>
		<b>+£1,945.12</b>

This obviously puts us in a much more stable position with regards to cash flow, which had become a significant concern at times in recent years.

Our current balances in comparison to this time last year are also up by £5,398.65. However this should not be taken at face value as significant expenditure will not necessarily fall at the same time each year.

	26th Oct 17	26th Oct 2018
Current	£11,449.05	£13,553.73
Reserve	£1,707.48	£5,001.45
Total	<b>£13,156.53</b>	<b>£18,555.18</b>
		<b>+£5,398.65</b>

We are still struggling with HMRC. However we have successfully had most of our historic fines repaid, as we have proven them to be unwarranted. We are currently at tribunal over the remaining £900. We are cautiously optimistic at getting at least some of this back. The reason for all these fines relate to historic "late" tax return submissions. However we have been able to demonstrate that we have been trying to submit them online as required, but their internal system has not been logging them.

Therefore things currently are much more stable and comfortable financially for CMA. This allows us to once again begin planning how best to increase our service to members, with the confidence that our cash flow will not be in jeopardy.

**Alan Preece, 26th October 2018**



## **National Training Co-ordinator's Report**

In total there were 29 study days with 331 attendees, which is absolutely fantastic.

(NB: these totals do not include the CMA conference in November 2017)

Many thanks to everyone involved, including the people who offered to organise a day and those who supported the events.

During this period 4 events were cancelled due to low numbers. Some regions have struggled to get high enough numbers to attend, and this is still an on-going issue.

Some regions (such as the South West) have a more established network and generally good attendance at events, and it would be nice if this could be extended to other areas. Therefore, it is important that people support events in their own regions and/or offer study days. Networking is just as vital to us all as the knowledge sharing, so it benefits everyone build strong regional networks.

There is a list below of the study days during this period, so everyone can see the range and type of subjects offered. As you can see, there is a great variety, which should encourage people to run a day on their site.

The number of places available on a study day has ranged from 6 to 40. The majority of spaces are free and made available for CMA members (and NT staff, where the NT are hosting the event). There are usually a small number of spaces for non-members at a cost of £40 more than the fee for CMA members. We now include a statement on Eventbrite saying that membership is £35, highlighting that it's more cost effective to join.

As of the conference in November 2018 I will be stepping down as the National Training Coordinator after holding it for 2 years. Please get in touch with me, or Mark Baker, if you are interested in the role and we can provide you with more information.

### **Study days during 2017-18**

- A Rangers' introduction to Farming
- A Rangers' Wildlife Identification day
- Applying a Biodiversity Management System at a busy Urban Shopping Centre
- Catchment management for water
- Challenges of managing an urban site at Wren's Nest National Nature Reserve
- Charcoal Making Using Rhododendron
- Coalhouse Fort Park: dealing with designations and boosting biodiversity
- Commons and Upland Farming on Dartmoor Study Day.
- Conservation Grazing and the Public
- Creating grassland priority habitats
- Ecology and Conservation Workshop for Dormice
- Environmental factors affecting the siting and use of bat boxes
- Erecting dormice nest boxes and tubes; maintenance of existing boxes
- Farming for Nature at RSPB Haweswater
- Freshwater Quality Monitoring
- Great Crested Newt Survey Morning
- Hay strewing meadow creation workshop

- Heathland restoration Big Hit versus Little and Often
- Horse logging on sensitive sites
- Managing Coppice in a Lake District Ancient Woodland
- Managing Invasive Plants In The Countryside
- Moth Trapping for Beginners
- Save our Orchards - Management and pruning study day.
- South West AGM & Guided Tour of the Tyntesfield Estate
- South West Ranger Forum; Greening the City & Urban Wildlife Conservation
- Valuing and Managing Veteran Trees
- Wildflower Identification by Family for Beginners/Improvers

**Janice Burley, 27<sup>th</sup> October 2018**

## **International Co-ordinator's Report**

In May 2017, the fourth European Ranger Congress was held in Litomerice, Czech Republic, bringing together 125 rangers from 27 countries including Russia, Germany, Iceland, Israel and Slovakia. 17 rangers attended from across the UK.

One of the highlights of the Congress was the formation of the European Ranger Federation (ERF) primarily to give a common voice to European Rangers whilst still under the umbrella of the International Ranger Federation (IRF)

Our own Vice President of CMA, Roger Cole has taken on a similar role with this new organisation and a small team has met on a couple of occasions since to take items forward.

2017 was an important year for the global ranger family celebrating the 10<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> anniversaries of the Thin Green Line Foundation (TGLF) and the IRF. The strength of the international ranger connectivity was highlighted by a wide variety of successful World Ranger Day events across the UK on July 31<sup>st</sup>. This date also gives everyone a chance to reflect on the sacrifice that so many Rangers make each year trying to protect our wildlife and specifically in memory of Wayne Lotter who was shot and killed in Tanzania on 16<sup>th</sup> August.

Chloe Bradbrooke, Lead Ranger, was financially supported by CMA to attend the Portuguese Ranger Association meeting in Quinta, continuing our annual support to this organisation, sharing experiences and knowledge.

Similarly, Paul Roberts, Ranger, was financially supported to attend the Swiss Ranger 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Camp held near Brunig.

CMA continues to help overseas Rangers wishing to gain valuable work experience in the UK and Roland Weber from Muritz National Park, Germany spent several weeks in four National Parks in January gaining knowledge, friendships and helping to improve his English language!

Help and support has also been given to several ranger associations that are in the early stages of formation. Georgia is one such association that is nearly there and it was wonderful news to

see the Ranger Association of Ireland (RAI) reform and relaunch in February 2018 and become a member of IRF with CMA as its sponsor.

**Ian Brooker, 24<sup>th</sup> October 2018**

## **Regional Reports**

### **North West Region**

We had a range of CMA study days in the North West region including *Valuing and managing veteran trees* in April, *Farming for nature RSPB Haweswater* in June, *Catchment management for water* in June, *Heathland Restoration – big hit versus little and often* in August, *Conservation grazing and the public* and *Managing a coppice in a Lake District Ancient Woodland*, both in September. These were generally really well attended and feedback was positive from all.

2017 also saw a really great World Ranger Day event held on the shores of Windermere. This event was a collaboration between the Lake District National Park rangers and the National Trust rangers with the all-important opportunity to spend some time together, reflect on the work of rangers around the world, share stories, have some food and of course, some fun watersports on the Lake. A successful event which was backed up on social media by local environmental charities including Cumbria Wildlife Trust.

Whilst we had an increase in membership during 2017/18, it would be great to have more active members in the region, to increase future attendance at study days, spread out the study day locations and increase contributions to the newsletter.

**Clair Payne, 25<sup>th</sup> October 2018**

### **East of England**

We published 3 issues of our regional newsletter in this period. We had a number of study days in the region: Coalhouse Fort Park (June 2017), Nest Boxes and Tubes for Dormice (March 2018), Ecology & Conservation of Dormice (March 2018). Unfortunately one study day at the Broads NP was due to run in April 2017 but was cancelled due to low uptake. I hope this can be rescheduled at some point as it looked to be an excellent event. Several members from the region attended the IRF European Ranger Conference in Czech Republic in May 2017.

**Tom Heenan, 29<sup>th</sup> October 2018**

### **South East & London Region**

#### **Newsletter**

We have produced a new regional newsletter the 'Beautiful South'. The intention of the regional newsletter is to coincide with the quarterly production of 'Ranger'.

The Beautiful South is your newsletter and to keep it 'yours' the editor, Phil Bolton needs regional members input with articles, events, estate management techniques, equipment use, volunteer news, site and ranger profiles etc.

## Events

I can report that the region has organised four training days (TD) and one study days (SD) during this period. The study day was cancelled unfortunately due to the lack of bookings.

The following events were organised:

Event	Date	Event type	Venue	Number of delegates attended
Great Crested Newt Survey Morning	08/04/2017	TD	Westmorland Park Pavilion,	3
Heathland reclamation turning waste wood into energy: A visit to Horsell Common's biomass operation	25/04/2017	SD	Horsell Common	Cancelled
Erecting dormice nest boxes and tubes, maintenance of existing boxes	15/01/2018	TD	Bluewater Shopping Centre, Greenhithe. Kent	12
Ecology and Conservation for dormice	23/02/2018	TD	Bluewater Shopping Centre, Greenhithe. Kent	12
Ecology and Conservation for dormice	27/03/2018	TD	Belhus Wood, Country Park.	12

## Future events/Actions

A sincere thanks to the venues who have hosted a training/study event. We do however need more venues and hosts to step forward please so we can extend and broaden the range of events we can provide for the membership.

Phil Bolton also need members to get in touch and fill in the training request form to let him know what events they would like to see in 2018/19.

## Outreach events

In January 2018, Richard Westwood and Phil Bolton attended the National Trust (SE) Ranger Conference held on the 25<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> January 2018. Both the South East's banners were present and the full CMA display. A big thank you to Chloe Bradbrooke, Lead Ranger for the invite.

## Current regional committee roles

Regional Coordinator – Richard Westwood

Training Officer – Phil Bolton

Regional Newsletter Editor – Phil Bolton

## County Representatives

Oxford – Vacant

Buckinghamshire – Vacant

Berkshire with North Hants – Richard Westwood

South Hants with Isle Wight – Vacant

Surrey – Vacant

Greater London – Vacant  
East Sussex – Vacant  
West Sussex – Vacant  
Kent – Phil Bolton

If you are interested in representing your county on the regional committee, please do get in contact using [southeast@countrysidemanagement.org.uk](mailto:southeast@countrysidemanagement.org.uk)

**Richard Westwood, 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2018**

### **Northern Ireland Region**

For Northern Ireland it's been an 'interesting' time in all aspects to say the least over the past year particularly for local teams and the uncertainty around Brexit, For government organisations a defaulted budget in governmental funding with the absence of a sitting assembly has led to a freeze on most projects, and not starting any new one. The implications have also impacted on small pot funding grants which many smaller environmental NGOs rely on. The future impacts of everything are uncertain and with nature not knowing borders whatever happens here could significantly impact on current and future cross-border environmental work.

CMA based activity has been the following;

- Individual CMA members now sits at 2 + National Trust corporate membership making up the bulk of CMA based comms and activity with the circa 45 Ranger and countryside based staff and 50+ regular volunteers/trainees/placements
- Regional Ranger gathering 30-31<sup>st</sup> Aug (NT countryside teams and Volunteers) hosted by the North Coast East team based out the coastal village of Cushendun in the Glens of Antrim.
- The formation of the Ranger Association of Ireland in the south has completed and the NI CMA rep joined the Ranger gathering leading to its formation in the Killarney National Park 27-28<sup>th</sup> Feb. With the formation of the RAI and its recognition with the ERF and IRF it opens up further possibilities within the island of Ireland to ensure good communication and relations with the ranger teams across both countries. We have the ambition to run joint gatherings and study days where able.

**Toby Edwards, 7<sup>th</sup> November 2018**