



National
Trust

AGM Minutes

2019

Minutes of the National Trust's
125th Annual General Meeting,
held at STEAM Museum, Swindon
on Saturday 19 October 2019

Chair: Tim Parker

Present: Hilary McGrady, Director-General
Members of the Board of Trustees
Staff and some 300 members of the National Trust

1. Welcome

Tim Parker, the Chair, welcomed members to the National Trust's 125th Annual General Meeting. He paid tribute to Simon Murray who had retired in August after 32 successful years leading on acquisitions, and more recently taking responsibility for Curatorship and Strategy. He also paid tribute to Len Clarke who during his lifetime had made a huge contribution to the Trust and wider countryside movement and had recently passed away aged 103.

The Chair noted that, during the year, climate change had dominated the public agenda. The Trust's response to climate change must be compatible with its core purpose, to look after the places in its care, for ever. It would use its voice in the debate and its contributions would be rooted in the practical experiences on its land – for example, working with tenant farmers to move towards farming practices that were successful both from a conservation and a commercial perspective.

The Trust would need to work in partnership, recognising that solutions to environmental problems were not all environmental. Solutions must be economic, social and political which meant being outward facing and working in collaboration with Government, NGOs and the private sector.

Much thought about climate change has been focused on its impact on nature and the countryside but less so on the impact it has on the houses and collections in the Trust's care. The Trust needed to think about what warmer summers meant for humidity levels in its houses in order to protect the treasures within and to take appropriate action.

The Chair noted that this year the Trust had been able to invest record amounts in conservation with £148 million spent on projects. Some demanding targets had not been met. This was largely due to bad weather over Easter 2018 which had resulted in some flooded car parks and properties. The reduction in visitors at what was traditionally the busiest time of the year had impacted overall visitor numbers across the year.

Conversely, membership had reached a high of 5.6 million with a 13% growth in membership income. Legacy income had increased by almost a third to £66 million. Overall income had grown by around £48 million.

The Chair noted the uncertainty of the political climate and the knock-on impact it might have on the Trust, given its reliance on people having the confidence to spend disposable income. It was looking to mitigate the risks posed by change, and Trustees had challenged the Executive Team on how they might future-proof the organisation more broadly.

The Trust continued to play an important role in society. The need for open spaces was as urgent as it was 125 years ago. There had been a 10% increase in the proportion of the UK's population living in urban areas over the last 40 years.

The Chair noted that press coverage had been mostly positive throughout the year. This was testament to the renewed push for quality across all aspects of the Trust's activities, particularly in its exhibitions. A greater emphasis had been placed on research, and the Trust had been awarded Independent Research Organisation status. This had opened the prospect of more academic grant funding, allowing exhibitions to be rooted in high-quality curatorial research.

Next year would be the Trust's 125th anniversary year, a year of celebration and reflection. The Trust continued to change in response to new threats and opportunities, reflect on concerns and priorities of different generations, to adapt to the needs of its audiences while always keeping the core purpose at its centre.

In commending the 2018/19 Annual Report and Financial Statements, the Chair thanked members, donors, tenants, centres, associations, partners, historic families, staff and volunteers.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held in Swindon on Saturday 20 October 2018 were approved by the meeting and signed by the Chair.

3. Director-General's review of the year

Hilary McGrady, Director-General, thanked members for attending the AGM. It was a time in history of

uncertainty, change, division and debate. The Trust, however, was about continuity and a reminder of why nature, history and beauty mattered.

There was much to be proud of, but the AGM was also an opportunity to think and debate the things that hadn't gone well. Extreme weather had had an impact on visitor numbers and on financial results. However, millions of people had been welcomed to Trust properties and £148 million invested in conservation projects.

The Trust was continuing with its strategy, improving visitor experience and making its land work harder for nature and people. As promised previously, it was also finding ways to connect with people beyond its boundaries, engaging with a wider, more diverse audience, particularly in urban areas.

There had been a lot of progress in this area in 2018. As an example, in Wales the Old Laundry House at Tredegar in Newport had been converted into a space for local community use. It included allotments, a sensory garden, accessible kitchens and meeting spaces. The historical building had been brought back to life and a new audience introduced to the Trust.

The Director-General reminded members of the Trust's work during the previous year with Newcastle City Council to create an Independent Parks Trust, ensuring a sustainable future for the city's park portfolio. The Trust was now working in partnership with the National Lottery Heritage Fund on a Future Parks Accelerator programme; 92 cities had applied to the fund, but support could be given to only eight. It was hoped that the programme would secure the future of the parks that it worked with and provide innovative models to help others.

The Trust had collaborated with The India Club in London which, virtually unchanged for 50 years, was a vibrant hub for Anglo-Indian organisations. It had worked with volunteers at the Club to establish an archive of oral history and to create a small exhibition. The goal of the project had been to give a voice to the variety of people connected with the Club, from freedom fighters and descendants of its founders, to former staff and artists. The project had left a legacy of research and created an ongoing relationship with the community.

An internal programme of work was ongoing to move the Trust towards being genuinely inclusive and more reflective of the nation it served, to ensure it was more relevant to more people as well as nurturing existing loyal supporters.

The Director-General noted some of the conservation projects that had taken place that year.

'Inspired by Knole', the most expensive conservation project ever undertaken by the Trust, had been completed with most of the money spent on the building, but also on the interior and the Trust's collections.

The £3 million restoration of Lindisfarne Castle to manage the effects of the wind and rain had been completed.

Mottisfont had opened a new kitchen garden with produce being used in the café and bags of salad being sold to visitors. Proceeds would be used to fund a garden apprentice post for the property.

The Director-General noted the curation of high-quality but temporary exhibitions and events throughout the year, such as 'House of Portraits' at Powis Castle, Powys and 'Pages of the Sea', a project involving Danny Boyle to commemorate the First World War where portraits of local war casualties were drawn into the sand and then washed away at high tide.

The national programming theme was 'Women in Power', celebrating the centenary of the women's suffrage movement at 100 Trust places through exhibitions designed to encourage people to think about the role of women in society and how it had evolved. 'We are Bess' at Hardwick Hall in Derbyshire was one example. The exhibition reflected on the perceptions of Bess of Hardwick, the second richest woman in Tudor England, and invited modern women to reflect on how history might remember them.

The Trust's New Art programme continued to inspire people to see properties in a different way. 'The Word Defiant' at Blickling in Norfolk was an artistic response to a conservation project in the library. Using books destined for recycling, the artists created a temporary display which offered a way for visitors to reflect on the value and importance of books. The overwhelming response was positive, although there had also been some negative feedback. This was expected as art was

provocative. The Trust would continue to tell fresh stories and provoke new perspectives on issues that were relevant to the public it served through multi-layered, well-researched, beautifully presented work. Programming gave people the chance to get involved and discover heritage on their doorstep.

The Director-General reflected on the public appetite for meaningful action to help nature recover and noted the Trust's ambition to do more.

'Riverlands' was a £10 million project to bring some of the most important rivers back to life. Less than 14% of rivers in England were considered to be in good condition. The Trust would be undertaking extensive habitat restoration work and creating paths to make waterways more accessible and to inspire people to look after their own rivers.

Of the 200,000 hectares of farmland owned by the Trust, over 50% was managed by tenant farmers who played a critical role in helping nature. Brexit had generated real uncertainty and was a factor in a number of tenants leaving the sector. Large-scale changes to the Common Agricultural Policy were imminent. The Trust would continue to focus its lobbying efforts on securing a strong Environmental Bill and Agricultural Bill that would deliver public money for public goods to, at least, the current levels of subsidy. The Trust believed that profitable farming could be compatible with the benign care of nature.

The Director-General commented that 2018 had been a year of highs and lows with the external environment dominated by Brexit and climate change. The Trust remained neutral on Brexit and was monitoring the potential impact.

Climate change had catapulted to the top of public consciousness. Although the Trust had been responding to climate change for many years from conservation to coastal adaption, it was now thinking differently about how people travelled to its places, what they bought when they got there and how it should engage with visitors on the issue. Young people were demanding action. It was up to the Trust to rise to the challenge.

The Director-General noted that next year was the Trust's 125th anniversary, an opportunity to celebrate what had been achieved, but also to reflect on what was needed from the Trust now and in the future.

124 years ago, the National Trust was created as an institution to safeguard places that matter to everyone, for ever. It was hoped that it could inspire many more people to participate in the years to come.

4. Members' questions

What steps was the National Trust taking to enable access for low-income families?

Sharon Pickford, Director of Support and Revenue, reiterated the importance of places being for everyone. A balance needed to be found between making the Trust accessible whilst ensuring that conservation needs were met. The Trust's income from its membership model enabled conservation to take place but was also designed to be affordable. Concessions were available and a monthly direct debit option had been introduced in recent years to help spread cost. Locally, initiatives were in place to support low-income families. Nationally, the Trust participated in National Heritage open days, worked with the Family Holiday Association and provided 400 families access to its places for free over the summer. Many Trust places across coast, countryside and parkland could be accessed at no cost.

Would the Trust support the Woodland Trust's campaign to protect woodland from the impact of HS2 and publicly record its concern for the issues and sympathy with its position?

John Orna-Ornstein, Director of Culture and Engagement, explained that the Trust was waiting for publication of the Oakervee Review which would inform its views. The Trust was on record as supporting the Woodland Trust's position on ancient woodland and supported the view that it would like HS2 to cease some of its work in sensitive areas but added that it was important to maintain a relationship with HS2 Limited in order to mitigate the impact of construction on Trust places.

Why hadn't the National Trust joined the other band of green groups, such as the Ramblers, Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace and the Woodland Trust in actively opposing HS2?

Steve Field, HS2 Manager, reiterated that the Trust needed to have a working relationship with HS2 to

monitor and mitigate the impacts from HS2 on Trust places. The Trust was considering the impact of HS2 on nationally designated landscapes such as the Chilterns, affected by Phase 1 of the route. It was also asking what ecological mitigation HS2 was taking, monitoring the effectiveness of those and suggesting remedial measures if they proved to be ineffective.

Would the Board of Trustees reconsider its policy for membership benefits for people over 60 so that they are not confined to those who have been members for over five years?

Sharon Pickford, Director of Support and Revenue, explained that the concession was offered as a reward for loyalty and was available for those who had been members for five out of the last 10 years. Although 25% of the membership base currently took the concession, many supporters donated the additional amount back to the Trust in support of its work. The Trust continued to monitor the public response to membership costs.

Why the Trust was looking to reduce sheep numbers in the Lake District?

Mark Harold, Director of Land and Nature, explained that whilst there was no policy to reduce sheep numbers, the Trust recognised that in some locations sheep numbers were too high in respect of its nature conservation aims, climate change ambitions and access. The Trust was aware of the importance of the culture of sheep farming in the area which underpinned its World Heritage Site status. The Trust was working in partnership with tenants and other organisations to find the right balance between the environment, landscape and viable farming units. A Farm Resilience Fund was in place and investment was being made in farms where appropriate.

Why did the Trust assume that its members would want to get involved with issues/politics that had nothing to do with historic, conservation or environmental issues?

John Orna-Ornstein, Director of Culture and Engagement, explained that the Trust had no desire to be political. The Trust's programming told the stories of families and its places and reflected on important historical events which it hoped would appeal to a wide audience.

Why did the Trust disclose salaries but no other

details of the Executive Team members remuneration packages?

Tina Lewis, Director of People and Legal Services, explained that the Trust had published information which was over and above the requirements of the Charity Commission and in line with the requirements of the National Council of Voluntary Organisations, but undertook to take the question back to the Senior Management Remuneration Committee.

Would the Trust consider labelling external taps that provided drinking water at properties and marking them on plans in leaflets of the estates in light of increasingly hot summers?

Mark Harold, Director of Land and Nature, thanked the member for the excellent idea and undertook to take it forward as part of environmental planning.

Two questions were taken on access for dogs. Why were dogs allowed in cafés, and why weren't dogs allowed at some properties during summer months?

Harry Bowell, Director of Operations and Consultancy, noted the significant number of questions from opposing viewpoints that the Trust received on dogs. A balance needed to be struck between those who wanted more access and those who were scared, allergic to or did not like dogs. Decisions on access were taken at property level but a Project Officer had been recruited to provide advice and guidance to properties to ensure that arrangements were more consistent.

Why did the Trust not respond to constructive feedback that was given after a property visit regarding accessibility?

Hilary McGrady, Director-General, was disappointed to hear that a response hadn't been received from the local team. Work was taking place to improve accessibility at properties but there was much still to do. The Trust was working in partnership with the Alzheimer's Society and looking at other opportunities. It was also investing in training to be able to support more people with different needs. The Director-General undertook to ensure that communications in response to feedback improved.

Overcrowding at properties was becoming an issue although visits to properties had not increased in line with member number growth. The Trust had, however, dramatically increased the target for the number of

property visits. Overcrowding at peak times needed to be properly managed to avoid satisfaction levels dropping. Should the Trust make improvements to infrastructure before increasing targets?

Peter Vermeulen, Chief Financial Officer, acknowledged that visitor numbers had fallen below target and explained that target numbers for future years would be revised. Growth was still expected and £20 million had been invested in visitor infrastructure during the last year. £100 million would be invested in visitor infrastructure and let estate work over the next five years which the Trust was confident would address the issues raised.

What steps was the Trust taking to increase awareness of its members and the wider public of the International National Trusts Organisation (INTO) given its activities in fostering Trust values globally and encouraging young members to volunteer on projects internationally was at present poorly understood?

Peter Vermeulen, Chief Financial Officer, explained that the Trust had a strong relationship with and provided considerable support to INTO, such as assistance with building a new website and reciprocal visitor arrangements. The international dimension to the Trust's work was important and this was considered a key relationship.

What was the Trust's policy on having automated external defibrillators (AEDs) at its sites?

Harry Bowell, Director of Operations and Consultancy, explained that the Trust had a clear policy which was that this was a local property decision based on first aid risk assessments that properties were required to carry out. There was no legal requirement to have an AED on site.

A few unpaid or poorly paid internships had been advertised by the Trust in the past. This was contrary to the provisions within new policies on equal opportunities launched in 2018. What would the Trust be doing to address this?

Tina Lewis, Director of People and Legal Services, explained that the Trust's internship programme would be replaced with paid opportunities making working at the Trust more accessible.

Why did the Trust refuse to allow badger culling on its

tenanted farms when Defra figures proved that culling worked?

Mark Harold, Director of Land and Nature, explained that culling was about addressing the issue of bovine tuberculosis which could decimate a whole herd through a single outbreak. It was a serious issue for the nation. Testing had been carried out in Dorset, Gloucestershire and Somerset and it was acknowledged that culling could have an impact on reducing outbreaks of bovine TB. Having said that, badger culling was at odds with the Trust's ethos as a conservation organisation and therefore it wasn't permitted on its farms. The Trust was seeking alternative methods of control and working with Defra and other partners to find non-lethal ways of addressing the disease. In addition, £1 million had been set aside by the Trust to work with tenant farmers affected by the disease.

Was the Trust in a position to share data on whether diversity in the Trust had increased?

Hilary McGrady, Director-General, explained that the Trust was trying to establish a clearer baseline in order to provide improved information on diversity. It was acknowledged that there was a deficit of representation from BAME and some socio-economic groups but confirmed that the Trust was working hard to attract a more diverse audience.

How can the Trust claim that it continues to only license responsible hunts when evidence has been submitted to the contrary?

Mark Harold, Director of Land and Nature, explained that licence conditions had become more stringent and were reviewed each year with hunts being monitored on a regular basis by an in-house team. Two licences had been rescinded in the last year. Unannounced scent testing had been introduced, and all hunts tested in the last year had been found to comply with conditions.

Was the Trust interested in purchasing Reading Gaol, given its historic significance?

John Orna-Ornstein, Director of Culture and Engagement, confirmed that no specific conversations had been held.

Did the Trust have an estimate of the carbon emissions from visitors driving to Trust properties and how did it compare with emissions from Trust estates?

Mark Harold, Director of Land and Nature, explained that time had been spent verifying the baseline figures required to understand the impact of the Trust's activities in terms of carbon footprint. International protocols were in place defining what organisations should be held accountable for. Visitor travel fell outside of the remit, but the Trust was including it in its investigations.

What positive action had the National Trust taken in the last 12 months to stop unlicensed stag hunting on its land, particularly in the Dorset area?

Mark Harold, Director of Land and Nature, acknowledged that the breadth of the Exmoor landscape made it difficult for the Trust to monitor stag hunting activity daily. Evidence of unlicensed activity on Trust land provided by external groups was reviewed on a case-by-case basis and, where possible, action taken though recourse was limited for short periods of trespass.

Did the Trust consider that the £10 million spent on fees to Investment Managers and paying a percentage of fees was acceptable?

Peter Vermeulen, Chief Financial Officer, explained that individual agreements were held with managers for fees relevant to the investment strategy and it was expressed in the accounts as a percentage of the value of the portfolio. Whilst £10 million was a lot of money, in context this was against £1.3 billion of investments deployed. The Trust paid 0.7% on the value of its portfolio in fees in return for active management of it. Active management ensured superior financial performance and engagement. Investments had over-performed against the benchmark in both the short and long-term. Investment managers were also actively involved in testing the environmental, social and governance credentials of the companies in which the Trust invested.

Would the National Trust consider working with British Naturism and member walk groups to run trial naturist events at suitable open country venues?

John Orna-Ornstein, Director of Culture and Engagement, stated that the Trust was open to a conversation but advised the member to speak to its local properties as it was a decision that would be taken at local level.

Would the Trust ask members to take a pledge and write to their MPs, MEPs, and councillors in support of Extinction Rebellion's three demands to ask the Government to tell the truth, act now and create a citizens' assembly on climate and ecological justice?

Tim Parker, Chair, noted the appeal to members and explained that the Trust was taking the issue of climate change seriously with many initiatives underway. The audience was reminded that a panel debate on climate change would be taking place after the AGM in which members were invited to participate.

5. Adoption of the Annual Report and Financial Statements for 2018/19.

The resolution to adopt the Annual Report and Financial Statements for 2018/19 was proposed by Paul Boniface, The Secretary, on behalf of the Chair, and seconded by Sandy Nairne, Trustee.

The resolution was carried on a show of hands.

6. Appointment of the Auditor

The resolution to reappoint KPMG LLP as external auditor to the National Trust until the next Annual General Meeting was proposed by Paul Boniface, The Secretary, on behalf of the Chair, and seconded by Zarin Patel, Trustee.

The resolution was carried on a show of hands.

7. Elections to the Council

Paul Roberts, Senior Member of the Council, gave an overview of the Council's structure and role, noting that it was made up of 36 volunteers who played an important part in the governance of the Trust. They were responsible for appointing the Board of Trustees and holding them to account while always reflecting the spirit of the Trust.

During 2018/19 the Council had appointed three Trustees with a diverse range of expertise and perspectives. These were confirmed as Caroline Kay, Zarin Patel and Ade Rawcliffe.

The Council was continuing to improve its mechanisms for monitoring the performance of the Board. It aimed to provide effective oversight while also contributing constructively and collaboratively to the important strategic questions that the Board faced. This was done through an annual cycle of meetings with a deep dive into a narrow set of focused topics during a multi-day regional visit.

Last year the Council visited the East of England region and heard directly from the region's staff, volunteers and partners on the progress and challenges around the Trust's agenda for experiences and land, outdoors and nature. Council members also considered how to manage pressure on properties brought about by the growth in visitor numbers.

Thanks was given to everyone who had stood as a candidate for the elections and to those that had taken time to vote.

Paul Boniface, The Secretary, added his thanks to those who had stood for election and announced the results of the ballot for elections of individuals to the Council. The high number of applicants was noted.

The voting results were as follows:

Geoffrey Wall	4,913	
Chris Paulson	1,323	
Doug Hulyer	11,880	Elected
Carly Tutty-Johnson	3,676	
Deborah Lamb	10,137	Elected
Colin Pease	5,387	
Andrew Powles	4,019	
Dan Cope	1,873	
Inga Grimsey	10,216	Elected
Madelaine Pierson	3,939	
Geoff Nickolds	4,922	
Elizabeth Whitehouse	7,179	
Grant Schlereth	2,404	
Dylan Butt	1,619	
Hugh Owen	2,906	
Dr Bruno Roesch	1,935	
Jack Kitchen	3,722	

Jamie Males	4,701	
Jemma Bartholomew	4,036	
Sheila Ely	6,625	
Kevin Corry	1,658	
Rachael Magson	3,200	
Michael Morris	1,386	
Oliver Maurice	1,476	
Malcolm Ellis	2,962	
Michael Salter-Church MBE	7,280	Elected
Mark Wright	4,959	
Alan Lascelles	2,652	
Penny Ann Marshall	5,667	
Michael Turville	1,487	
Leslie Brantingham	3,050	
Philip Monk	5,502	
Robin Leigh	1,589	
William Parry	3,761	
Simon Sansome	7,897	Elected
Sarah Hollingdale	9,796	Elected
Dr Tom Kennedy	3,729	
Sarah Lewis-Briggs	4,048	
Rod Giddins	3,963	
Peter Brotherton	954	
Stuart Grant	1,608	
Jenny Evanson	2,439	
Stuart Quin	3,105	

8. Members' Resolution about the National Trust's partnership with Cadbury

To cease the partnership between the National Trust and Cadbury for the Cadbury Easter Egg Hunt and find a sustainable and ethical alternative.

The resolution was proposed by **Roseanna Bienzobas** who expressed concern about the rainforests of Southeast Asia being destroyed at an alarming rate for palm oil production, driving critically endangered species to the brink of extinction. A century ago there had been more than 230,000 orangutans living in the rainforests of Southeast Asia. Now, according to figures by the World Wildlife Fund, there were less than half that number. Destruction of the rainforest was a key driver of climate change as rainforests were vital in soaking up carbon dioxide emissions.

The National Trust had been in partnership with Cadbury for their Easter Egg Hunts for the last 12 years. Cadbury was owned by Mondelez International and was formerly owned by Kraft Foods. Mondelez was a member of the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO). However, between 2015 and 2017, palm oil suppliers to Mondelez destroyed an area of rainforest of 70,000 hectares. This was according to a Greenpeace International report, *Dying for a cookie*, published in November last year.

Ms Bienzobas noted that Cadbury's parent company continued to source unsustainable palm oil, despite its stated commitment to responsible sourcing. Recently Greenpeace, which had been working with Mondelez, decided to halt engagement with it over its 'continued failure to take the necessary action to cut deforestation from its supply chains'.

Palm oil suppliers to Cadbury's parent company, Mondelez, had also been accused of exploitation, including subjecting migrant workers to forced labour, exploiting victims of trafficking and child labour.

Ms Bienzobas stated that it was clear that Cadbury was profiting from dirty and destructive environmental practices and asked whether it was right that the National Trust should indirectly profit from such practices by continuing in partnership with the company or whether there was a break clause which could be employed earlier to terminate the contract with Cadbury?

The resolution was seconded by **Sue Morris** who highlighted the report commissioned by the Board of National Trust in 2017 to review the production and sourcing practices of Mondelez, Cadbury's parent company. The Trustees had stated that they have received 'reasonable assurance' that Mondelez had programmes in place to address the environmental issues. This was questioned considering apparent evidence to the contrary in its supply chain.

Ms Morris asked members to consider whether profit should win over protection of the planet? The continued partnership with Cadbury was unacceptable and incompatible with the National Trust's aims as a charity that stands up for nature.

Orna NiChionna, Deputy Chair, thanked the proposers and responded on behalf of the Board of Trustees. The

Trust had worked with Cadbury on its Easter trails since 2007 as part of its aim to broadcast the message that the Trust was a family-friendly institution. Since then, Cadbury had supported the Trust annually with finance, marketing materials and staff. The Easter trails had been a huge success in achieving its original aims.

The current agreement with Cadbury was due to end after Easter 2021, and the relationship was under review. The Easter trail offer was large in scale, delivered across 261 properties, and required a lot of planning and precise execution. A change in partners would take more than a year to negotiate, select and plan. Ending the contract immediately would incur significant cost and the Trust would not be able to deliver its Easter trail offer in 2020.

The Trust was very clear that there was no place for unsustainable palm oil in its supply chain and the challenge posed by the members' resolution had been put to Cadbury. The issue outlined in the Greenpeace report, *Dying for a cookie*, last November was one of traceability. Suppliers claimed that palm fruits were from sustainable sources, but that was not always the case. The mills used supplied big global commodity traders, such as Cargill and Wilmar International, and Mondelez bought from those commodity traders. It was a long complex supply chain and questions had been raised over how accurate tracing could be throughout the more fragmented end of the supply chain.

Cadbury had offered assurance that they were committed to using 100% sustainable and traceable palm oil and were driving change. The Greenpeace report had had a big impact. The parent of Cadbury, Mondelez, had dropped 12 upstream suppliers immediately. The Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil had tightened its rules and declared that it would be implementing them with more rigour.

The Mondelez supplier, Wilmar, had committed to much more rigour and ruthlessness in dropping suppliers which could not prove compliance, as well as monitoring them much more tightly. Mondelez had reissued its palm oil plan, which further increased pressure on its suppliers to improve traceability and compliance.

Greenpeace had acknowledged these positive steps stating that if Wilmar was true to its word, other traders would be forced to do the same and palm oil producers that destroy forests would have no one to sell to.

Mondelez and Wilmar had acted quite decisively and committed to do more. The World Wildlife Fund was releasing a new palm oil buyers’ scorecard setting higher standards of traceability. The Trust would trigger the break clause with Cadbury if Mondelez was not in line with those standards when it read that report, meaning that Easter 2020 would be the final Easter with Cadbury.

Ms NiChionna stated that the concerns behind the resolution had been heard and understood and the situation would be monitored to ensure Mondelez increased its safeguards against unsustainable palm oil.

Members raised a number of discussion points:

The Trust’s stance on this matter ignored the struggles and all too frequent deaths of indigenous peoples who fight daily battles to protect their places of historic interest and natural beauty. Breaking a contract would cost money but what price would the Trust put on life?

How much would it cost to terminate the relationship immediately in terms of a payment to Mondelez?

Cadbury had strong ethical values in its roots. Has the Trust and Cadbury considered what Easter was about other than chocolate?

Had the Trust considered its reputation in peddling sugar, a harmful substance, to its members and could an alternative to chocolate be used for the Easter Egg hunt?

Had the Trust considered using smaller, local companies to provide chocolate?

The proposers of the resolution were applauded for bringing the matter to the attention of members as change would only happen if people stood up to big companies.

Could the Trust do more to educate people in long-term sustainable diets?

Sharon Pickford, Director for Support and Revenue, responded to the points, noting that leaving the contract early would cost the Trust in the region of £7 million. Easter provided the Trust with a significant income stream. Chocolate had worked well as an incentive to encourage families to Trust places, with families representing almost 25% of members largely driven by Easter activity. The relationship with Cadbury had opened the door to people who had not visited Trust places previously. The Trust was reviewing the

partnership, noting that there were few partners that would be capable of delivery in the same way as Cadbury. Due diligence formed part of that review process and other options for the Easter offer were also under consideration.

In summing up on behalf of the Board of Trustees, **Ms NiChionna** highlighted the call in the supporting statement of the resolution for an immediate cessation of the contract with Cadbury and the costs that would be incurred if this were to happen. Members were invited to vote against the resolution.

In her closing statement, **Ms Bienzobas** highlighted that in her view Mondelez had failed to cut deforestation from their supply chain. Consideration had been given to delaying the resolution on the basis that the contract was under review. However, deforestation was continuing daily, and wildlife killed. The relationship was incompatible with the aims and values of the Trust. Members were invited to vote for the resolution.

The Chair thanked the speakers for their final comments. Following a show of hands, a ballot was held. The votes cast at the meeting were added to those of the members who had voted in advance of the meeting. The results of the ballot were as follows:

	For	Against
Specified	12,746	16,068
Discretionary	6	4,327
Abstentions	1,894	
TOTAL	12,752	20,395

The resolution was not carried.

9. Conclusion

The Chair thanked all for attending and watching online, and formally closed the 2019 Annual General Meeting.

If you'd like this information in an
alternative format, please contact
The Secretariat on 01793 817663

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