

2024 Annual General Meeting



**Devon
Mammal
Group**

Wednesday 30th October – 7.30pm

The Boniface Centre, Church Walk, Union Road, Crediton EX17 2AH

Attendees in person: Ellie Knott, Charly Mead, Emily Young, Hilary Marshall, Simone Bullion, Edward Jackson, George Bemment, Hazel Acland, Dominic Acland, Kate Hills, Dave Groves, Stephen Carroll, Chris Blood.

Attendees via Zoom: Jean Turner, Chris Hughes, Jon Valters, Jan Gannaway, Mike Treble, Jenny Page, Brian Wood, Alan Shuttleworth.

Chaired by Charly Mead, Minutes by Simone Bullion

1. Apologies for Absence: Phil Collins, Sarah Butcher, Sue Smallshire, Mike Treble, Graham Cooper & Mrs Cooper, David & Maureen Thomas, Stephen Powles.
2. Minutes of the 2022 AGM were made available on the website, members were made aware of where they could be found when invited to the AGM. The minutes were accepted by members with no changes.
3. Chairman's Report: Given by Charly Mead (Chair). Informed members that thanks to funding from Devon Environment Fund, the Harvest Mouse Project is continuing for the 2024-5 season. Activities that the group has been involved in during the year were highlighted, including the West of England Dormouse meeting, the National Hedgehog Monitoring Project and Gara Water Vole Reintroduction Project. The group also had a visit to Dayshul Brake to look at the beaver reintroduction habitat and the re-wilding project. Two events were attended with a stand (Rainforest Discovery Day at Yarner Wood and Meldon Wildlife Festival).
4. Presentation of Accounts by Ellie Knott (Treasurer): Income included just over £1000 in membership, donations, including a legacy from Margaret Bristow (shown as donations), topped up by Gift Aid credit. A small amount of money was obtained from Amazon Smile. The Zoom licence is a major cost for running events but enables the holding of on-line talks which are still popular.

The Harvest Mouse project was funded the Devon Environment Fund for the 2023-2024 season. Money left over from grants from Tesco Bags of Help and Lush was used to cover spending on equipment from previous years which had not been claimed.

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Devon Mammal Group accounts 2023 – 2024 Opening balance 1st April 2023 £6,206.63

Accounts 2023/24	Income	Expenditure
Membership	£1,097.50	£29.15
Sales stock (selling)	£0.00	
Sales stock (buying)		£0.00
Events	£393.53	£607.38
Trips	£0.00	£0.00
Harvest Mouse Project 2023-2024	£6,735.00	£4,640.30
Harvest Mouse Project 2022-2023		£544.02
Harvest Mouse Project 2021-2022		£210.87
Website (hosting & domain name)		£135.40
Printing Newsletter		£0.00
Amazon Smile	£25.74	
Donations	£1,097.73	£0.00
Interest/Bank charges/Admin	£0.00	£0.00
Equipment	£26.99	£102.95
Insurance		£96.00
Gift Aid Credit	£247.05	
Mammal Society Membership		£43.00
Small Grants Scheme		£0.00
Totals	£9,623.54	£6,409.07
Closing balance		£9,421.10

Devon Mammal Group Harvest Mouse Project accounts 2023 – 2024 Opening balance 1st April 2023 £1,382.25

Accounts 2023/24	Income	Expenditure
Devon Environment Foundation Grant	£5,108.00	
Donations	£300.00	
Card Sales (Jess's & Xmas)	£0.00	
Project Officer Time		£4,972.50
Project Officer Travel		£518.40
Insurance		£182.00
Talks/Events	£50.00	£0.00
Training Days		£0.00
Equipment		£288.00
2021-2022 Project (LUSH)		£210.87
2022-2023 Project (Tesco Bags of Help)		£544.02
Totals	£5,458.00	£6,715.79
Closing balance		-£163.54



5. Elections to Committee: the following committee members are up for re-election and who are all happy to stand again:

Phil Collins: Proposer George Bemment, Seconded Paul Chanin
Sarah Butcher: Proposer George Bemment, Seconded Leo Gubert
Stephen Carroll: Proposer Paul Chanin, Seconded Dave Groves.

The current Committee is:

- Chair – Charly Mead
- Vice Chair – Phil Collins
- Secretary – Simone Bullion
- Membership Secretary – Chris Hughes
- Treasurer – Ellie Knott
- Website Officer – Beth Markey
- Sue Smallshire
- Hilary Marshall
- Kate Hills
- Stephen Carroll
- Sarah Butcher

James Burrell and Michael Hodges joined the committee since the 2023 election, but both resigned during the year.

6. Harvest Mouse Project update: Sarah Butcher was unable to attend but sent a PowerPoint presentation with highlights that was presented by Ellie Knott. In the last year, there were 16 group surveys with 301 attendees. Five training sessions were held for 125 participants. Survey hours totalled 268 and nests were found in 34 hectads. In addition, two training sessions were held on owl pellet analysis and also two community events attended.

There is funding from the Devon Environment Fund for the 2024-2025 season and Sarah has a series of surveys planned already. Thanks were expressed to Sarah and also to supporters of the project including landowners and the funders.

7. Any Other Business - none

The AGM was followed by a talk by Paul Chanin on 'The Otter Among Us, Past, Present and Future'. Paul is a mammal ecologist with a wealth of experience on otters and is the author of the fascinating book on otters, published by Whittet Books. Paul gave an historical overview of how otter populations declined due to Dieldrin pesticides and then recovered. He then brought us up to the present with the results of the most recent National Otter Surveys for both Wales and England. He also covered the latest research on otter genetics and how there were genetic bottlenecks arising from the declines of the last Century.