

Annual meeting report – February 7, 2024

A total of 30 members met at Wroxham Barns NR12 8QU on Wednesday, February 7 for the 182nd annual meeting of Stalham Farmers' Club.

Earlier 19 members and guests had enjoyed a two-course supper with the chairman William Sands and vice-chairman Jonathan Pye. The evening's speaker, club member Tom Hume arrived after supper.

Welcome - The chairman William Sands opened the meeting at 7.35pm and welcomed members and guests.

Apologies – Tim Papworth, Nick Deane, Graham Duncanson, John Grier, Louis Baugh, Ian Willetts, Vera Gracic.

Minutes – The minutes of the 181st annual meeting, which have on the website for 12 months, were noted.

Chairman's report – William Sands summarised his last year and said that the decision to move to Wroxham Barns for the winter programme had been well received and especially the supper. He would give a fuller report at the March annual dinner but thanked members for their support.

Secretary's report – Michael Pollitt thanked the club's webmaster Tim Papworth for his efforts in keeping the website up to date – and a total of 321,000 visits have been logged. It was remarkable given the club's membership of about 140. Clearly, Stalham's activities were of keen interest to outsiders!

He also apologised for presenting two year's accounts, which covered the years to December 31, 2023 having missed the 2022 annual meeting through illness. In summary, the club was in good financial health with combined bank balances of circa £7,300. Broadly speaking, the club has broken even over the past two years – with a surplus of about £100. There had been a significant expenditure on suppers and dinners, partly because the cost to members had been subsidised to encouraged attendance. In broad terms, this spending accounted for a total of almost £2,500 over the two years. For information, he reported that in the two years – including the Covid 19 pandemic – there had been a surplus of about £2,600.

The interest received had increased from £3.34 to £49 in the two years. After presenting the accounts, seconded by George Gay, they were adopted.

The ongoing support for North Walsham Young Farmers' Club was noted including invitations to supper as guests at the January meetings. Mr Pollitt proposed that the club subsidise North Walsham YFC members at the forthcoming 80th anniversary celebrations at the Norfolk showground, the Oak Ball. It was agreed to take a table of 10, costing £650, on behalf of North Walsham members – effectively reducing the cost, which could be enjoyed by all its members.

Elections -

President: - George Gay (three year post to 2025).

Honorary vice-presidents: – Ken Leggett MBE, Thomas Love, Christopher Deane, Jonathan Deane, Tim Papworth and Michael Pollitt.

Chairman: – Jonathan Pye, proposed by William Sands; seconded Ken Leggett.

Secretary/ treasurer: – Michael Pollitt, proposed William Sands, seconded Christopher Deane.

Membership secretary: – Jo Willetts, proposed by William Sands, seconded Jonathan Pye.

Committee: – includes President, former chairman, hon vice-presidents and up to six members.

Agreed that a North Walsham YFC member should be invited.

The following, who have served on the committee, were thanked including Chris Borrett, Michael Eales, Alistair ross, Alistair Wright, Guy Paterson and Sarah Ellero.

Resolved – the new chairman/ former chairman would canvas members, and former committee members, to serve on the committee, which would aim to meet at least twice-yearly to plan club activities and events.

Annual dinner – It was reported that a total of 82 tickets had been booked – with numbers at the Salhouse Lodge on March 13, 2024 at 100. It was hoped that this could be increased.

The formal meeting was closed at 7.50pm. The chairman then introduced Tom Hume – the first Stalham member to swim the English Channel.