



Alderney
Wildlife Trust

Alderney Wildlife Trust AGM

Chairman's Report 2024

The AWT Board has continued in its efforts to ensure the Trust is resilient and equipped for the roles it performs so well and which have been detailed in the CEO's report. With a growth in staff numbers and ongoing projects it is vital that the Trust's infrastructure adapts to reflect these changes. The Board monitors risk, health and safety, safeguarding, regulation and budgets and the increasingly sophisticated business planning processes. The Directors are all volunteers who bring their diverse skills and experience together to provide effective governance and oversight to AWT.

As Chair, I regularly attend the weekly staff meetings which give me a useful insight into the realities of service delivery against the aspirations and objectives in the Business Plan. I am continually impressed by the enthusiasm and commitment of our staff team and volunteers.

We value our relationship with States of Alderney particularly at an operational level where effective liaison between staff benefits both organisations. AWT has good working arrangements with the States of Alderney staff teams. However, you will have seen from the CEO report that support for the Trust and even the Ramsar site is not universal amongst States members. It is hard for the AWT Board to understand the rationale for the minority of States members who are not supportive and seem opposed to having direct dialogue with either the Board or staff. Fortunately, the majority of elected members do recognise the value and benefit the Trust brings to the Island.

States of Alderney funding through the Service Level agreement has remained at the same level for decades meaning that in real terms it has declined considerably. Contrary to what you may hear in the Journal or elsewhere the AWT is not largely States funded, in fact the SLA made up less than 5% of the AWT's income in 2023 and even then the services delivered under the SLA are not completely covered by the grant. As you will have seen in the CEO report, hundreds of hours are spent by staff supporting the Ramsar site alone, without any States funding, and without actively seeking such funding. This is because the AWT was founded as a community organisation established for the benefit of the island and we can see how supporting the States in its care of our natural environment is vital for Alderney's future.

AWT has been successful in securing the necessary income to fund our work from a variety of other sources, including bringing in funding from outside the Island so that we remain in a sustainable financial position. However, to continue to operate at this level we need to continue to find support and funds, and we hope the membership can continue to aid us in this endeavor.

Our membership is crucial to our success. Membership income is important, and with our new members' offers we hope you can both see these benefits but also help us recruit new members. Yet even more important is the message that our 700 plus members helps to give in terms of support for the work we do. I cannot think of another wildlife or environmental charity which has such a high proportion of supporters as a percentage of the population.

Thank you to all who work, volunteer or belong to AWT!

Brian Heath MBE 27th May 2024