



24 August 2021

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING VIA ZOOM WEDNESDAY 22 SEPTEMBER 2021 AT 1900

Dear Member

We are writing to invite you to our 2021 AGM and annual review to be held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2021.

Whilst we would have preferred to host this as a social event, we feel that COVID-19 is still too prevalent for this to be an option in 2021. As such we will once again be hosting the AGM via Zoom with the link included below and will also be posted on our website on the day. If you would like to attend but struggle with accessing online video calls then please let us know, we are only too happy to help get you set up and ready.

As the Ouse & Adur Rivers Trust continues to grow in stature and its work becomes more ambitious and diverse it is important that we are mindful of our sustainability into the future and that we continue to operate to our potential. With this in mind, we are seeking new Trustees to join our Board and help to steer OART into the future. If you are interested in becoming more involved in our operations, then please do contact me for more information at [hew.prendergast@oart.org.uk](mailto:hew.prendergast@oart.org.uk).

Whilst we appreciate that most will be fed up with virtual meetings, the AGM is an important part of our governance and a great opportunity for you to hear more about the work we have done during 2020/21 which, whilst constrained, has still delivered some fantastic improvements to the water environment and there is a lot to look forward to in the future. Please do let me know if you can attend so that we know we will be quorate for the meeting.

We very much look forward to seeing you on the 22<sup>nd</sup> September.

**Zoom Link:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86243029851?pwd=SEhtT3VGaIBkTHYlSGo4aUhRYkx3Zz09>

Kind regards

Hew Prendergast, Chairman

Oakwood House,  
Bridgelands,  
Barcombe Cross,  
East Sussex  
BN8 5BW

Company No: 03839870

Registered Charity No: 1082447





## VIRTUAL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING VIA ZOOM

**WEDNESDAY 22 SEPTEMBER 2021 AT 1900**

### Agenda

- 1. Welcome.**
- 2. Apologies for absence.**
- 3. Chairman's Report 2020-21 (written only).**

Unlike last year, this one was dominated by COVID-19. It had an impact on OART's staff, some being furloughed; on our projects whose schedules had to be rejigged; and on the way we have all increasingly conducted ourselves online rather than face-to-face. Yet, as we will hear later, OART has continued to thrive thanks to a flexibility and adaptability that would perhaps have been unimaginable before the pandemic. There is little doubt that some of the required changes in working practice will endure. Through all this Trustees have remained highly appreciative of the commitment of OART staff Pete King, Rachel Paget, Alistair Whitby, Linda Kerrison and (appointed right at the end of the year) Tara Dawson.

During the year Trustees have discussed the importance of OART achieving a sustainable critical mass, with sufficient reserves of unrestricted funds to tide over staff costs between the end of old and the start of new funding streams. To this end a meeting was held with an adjacent Rivers Trust to test the financial and logistic benefits of a closer relationship. Although no conclusions were reached, it may pave the way for any future such initiative.

In July 2020 OART was delighted to receive news that the Environment Agency had finally and successfully prosecuted the perpetrator of the appalling pollution incident in 2016 on the Plumpton Mill Stream to which members had been the first to draw attention. COVID-19 restrictions prevented much volunteer-driven water quality testing through the year but opportunity was taken to create a bespoke laboratory in a farm building near Barcombe. Unfortunately, however, COVID did prevent much of the winter's sea trout monitoring in both the Adur and Ouse catchments.

The main financial challenge to OART remains maintaining buoyancy, and retaining staff, from one project to another. The two largest of these, EPIC (Enhancing Places Inspiring Communities) and StAR (Slaugham to Ardingly Restoration), both finish in 2021/2022 while the funding environment for charities is as competitive as ever. Finding new sources, for example the commercial sector, will be key.

Finally, I would like to thank John Whiting for his many years as a Trustee and founder of both OART and one of its predecessors, the River Adur Conservation Society.

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#### 4. Finance Report – Simon Turner / Peter King

A review and report on the current financial status of OART and approval of the accounts.

#### 5. Appointment and Election of Trustees.

The Trustees seek approval from members to re-elect James Ebdon and Sam St Pierre who retire by rotation. John Whiting also retires by rotation and does not seek re-election. Other nominations should be sent by email to [hew.prendergast@oart.org.uk](mailto:hew.prendergast@oart.org.uk) to arrive no later than 12.00 on the 15<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

#### 6. Presentation on OARTs work in 2020/2021

This years presentation cover the work undertaken in 2020/21 including our flagship Enhancing Places, Inspiring Communities (EPIC) and Slaugham to Ardingly Restoration (StAR) projects. We will also look at the development of the Cockshut enhancement scheme, progress on our partnership with Lewes District Council to use nature based solutions to reduce flood risk and all the other projects which have been completed or started over the past year.

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