Root & Branch
Westmill Farm
Watchfield
Oxfordshire
SN6 8TH

Minutes of Annual General Meeting for the year 2025-2026

Tuesday 13th October 2026 held at Root & Branch Westmill at 6:30pm

Currently these minutes are unapproved. They will be reviewed and approved by members present at the 2027 AGM. In the meantime, if you were present at the AGM on the 13th of October 2026 and you would like to make any comments on the minutes, please do get in touch with Root & Branch.

Present

David Atkins, Chair of the Trustee Board
Richard Taylor, Trustee
Emma Welch, Trustee
Rosemary Wheeler, Interim Centre Manager
Carolyn Place, Trustee
Nick Daisley, Trustee
Victoria Silk, Trustee
Joss Giddings, Member
Sarah Coleman, Staff
Kate Pritchard, Staff
Peter King, Member
Jo Cholmeley, Member
Susan Hardy, Member
Liz Rothschild, Member
Roger Wilkins, Member

Proxy Voting Form
None Received

Minutes prepared by V.Silk
****th October 2026**

Apologies

Colin Bell, Adam Twine, Brian Mildenhall, Marie Annick Jube.

1. Welcome and opening remarks

David Atkins welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked everyone for attending.

David thanked staff, members, volunteers, patrons, stakeholders and participants for a successful year.

David read some direct quotes from participants reflecting on the difference that Root & Branch (R&B) has made to their lives which was a fantastic reflection of the work done by the R&B team throughout the year.

David praised Tanya for her hard work and excellent leadership of the centre, he offered his heartfelt thanks for everything that Tanya has done for the charity throughout her time as Centre Manager. David also thanked Rosie for stepping into the interim Centre Manager role and continuing this excellent work.

David specially thanked Adam Twine, whose support over the last year has been especially valuable not least because of the extension of R&B's lease for a further 10 years, providing stability to the organisation. David also acknowledged and celebrated Adam's incredibly well-deserved award - an MBE in King Charles III's Birthday Honours List 2026 for services to community onshore wind.

2. General report

Rosie began by thanking Tanya for her dynamic and committed management of the centre, Tanya made a massive contribution to R&B and this was reflected in the wonderful farewell that she received from staff, trustees, volunteers and participants earlier in the year. Rosie noted that the send off and gifts and words of thanks given to Tanya reflected the affection that everybody held her in.

Rosie went on to explain that when she stepped into the role of interim Centre Manager in June the main focus was to provide stability and continuity for the R&B team and participants but also to prepare for the new challenges and opportunities that the new funding projects were bringing. It was noted that the last year has been extremely positive in securing several new funding sources including a substantial grant from the National Lottery which will be truly transformative and provide some stability for the future.

Rosie explained that alongside significant opportunities, R&B faced challenges in the last 12 months including the hottest summer that the team have had to manage. Even when the extreme heat and the associated risk to health and wellbeing meant that the centre had to close, support for participants continued and Rosie praised the staff team for the way that this was managed. In addition, thanks to the dedicated efforts led by Kate, the garden continued to flourish despite the difficult conditions.

This year also marked a milestone for R&B since it was our 25th anniversary. This was a wonderful opportunity to reflect on how many people R&B has touched in the last quarter of a century. Countless messages of support received reinforced how much the organization means to so many people. In addition, the winter fayre and the plant sale were both record-breaking successes, raising valuable funds and providing opportunities for people to connect and celebrate what R&B does.

Rosie ended her report by thanking each and every one of our volunteers. R&B currently has 28 volunteers whose support of the staff team, positivity, patience and good humour play such a huge part in making R&B the warm, welcoming and inclusive community that it is. The skills and commitment of our volunteers are absolutely invaluable to the running of the centre. Anya, one of our volunteers, received "Volunteer of the Year" award from Oxfordshire Community and Voluntary Action in recognition of her outstanding contribution and Rosie thanked Anya for the amazing literacy support that she has provided to participants over the last five years.

In July, we received the sad news that one of our longstanding participants had died. She continued attending regularly until the final week of her life and we held a gathering in the garden in her memory in September.

Rosie noted that this year has brought change, challenge, celebration, and loss, and through it all, R&B has remained resilient, we are growing and thriving and thanks to all involved we are well place for another successful year to come.

3. Minutes of previous meeting (held October 14th 2025)

Vicki stated that the minutes of the previous AGM had been available on the website this year. All members had been notified and invited to this AGM on the 18th September 2026. At this time all members had been directed to the AGM minutes and the published accounts for the financial year 2025/2026 which were available to download from the website. There had been no proxy voting forms sent in.

There were no questions or matters arising from the minutes of the AGM that was held on 14th October 2025. Therefore the minutes were approved as a true record: this was proposed by Nick Daisley and seconded by Carolyn Place.

4. Financial report

David Atkins provided a summary of the official financial situation for the year 1st April 2024 - 31st March 2025, highlighting that R&B continues to be in a good financial position. David noted that the Board is lacking a Treasurer Trustee but continues to take all appropriate steps to diligently oversee R&B's finances.

The year ended with a surplus and this enabled us to maintain our adequate level of reserves. The full annual accounts have been independently prepared by an accountant and can be viewed on our website. They will be published with both Companies House and the Charity Commission. There were no questions about the set of published accounts.

Total income for the year ended 31st March 2026 was £174,746 slightly higher than the previous year and this success is a testament to Karen and the team's fundraising efforts. David also praised the skills of Tanya and now Rosie and Sarah in managing R&B's funds which it was acknowledged is a complex task.

5. Project Canopy/Lottery funding

Kate Pritchard presented the strategy behind the implementation of Project Canopy (the four-year outreach project funded by the Lotteries Community Fund). Kate explained that there are two main strands to the project, the first being to consolidate services offered at the centre and the second to develop and deliver a community outreach programme offering early intervention over a four-year period with the purpose of supporting people to recover or better manage their mental health and then to potentially rejoin and reconnect with society. We are at the beginning of the journey in year one during which key priorities are a review of current systems, conducting outreach pilots and nurturing partnerships.

Key points include:

- Programmes and activities to be offered: Cultivating Recovery (STH), nature-related activities (art, gardening), mindfulness, healthy cooking, and matching individuals to appropriate programmes; also signposting to additional support.
- Priority groups to reach: 18–25 years old, sanctuary-seekers/new arrivals, and people experiencing rural isolation/poverty.
- Early targets: in the first year there is an initial access target of eight new referrals (phase one) as part of the pilot.
- At the centre, one of the goals is to encourage participants to become peer mentors as their own confidence increases.
- Fund enables an increase in staff hours, including administrative support; Kate has also increased her hours to lead the project.

Kate provided an outline of what outreach and community engagement would look like and it will include: attending existing local groups and building trust relationships (being “hosted” by groups) with an emphasis on ethical and trust-based approaches.

6. Election of trustees

All members received notification of the voting details *via* email on the 18th September 2026. This notice contained details of two trustees who would be stepping down by rotation. Emma Welch, having served on the Board for three terms (nine years in total) stepped down in line with R&B’s constitution. Huge thanks and gifts were presented to Emma in appreciation and gratitude for her amazing contribution to R&B over the years. Emma will continue in her role as volunteer going forwards.

All of the remaining current board members had agreed to remain on the board for another year.

Trustee Carolyn Place stood down by rotation at the meeting. Carolyn was put forward for re-election; this was proposed by Emma Welch seconded by Richard Taylor and she was voted back to the board by the majority of members present.

Trustee Nick Daisley stood down by rotation at the meeting. Nick was put forward for re-election; this was proposed by Carolyn Place seconded by David Atkins, and he was voted back to the board by the majority of members present.

7. Meeting close

David thanked everyone for coming to the AGM and for their very valuable support.

Meeting closed at 19:35.