



Surrey
Wildlife Trust

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General questions about Annual General Meetings (AGM)

What is an Annual General Meeting?

Surrey Wildlife Trust is a registered charity managed by Trustees who are appointed by members. Our Trustees are a group of volunteers who hold the financial and legal responsibility for everything the Trust does.

Our Trustees bring a wide range of knowledge, expertise and experience to the charity and are responsible for approving our strategic plans, annual budget and Annual Report & Accounts.

Members are invited to attend, participate and vote at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). At the AGM, members have the opportunity to understand and influence the direction of the Trust, to take part in its governance by voting, and to hear about the great work we are doing for nature through our dedicated staff and volunteers.

Matters discussed and approved at the AGM are set out in the Trust's Articles of Association. You can view the Articles of Association under 'Other Governance Documents and Report & Accounts' on our [Governance](#) page.

Why are you asking me to vote?

Surrey Wildlife Trust is a membership organisation and members have the right to influence the activities of the Trust and take part in its governance. Members also have the right to vote on resolutions set out in the Notice of the AGM.

Voting

I am a new member, can I vote?

New members who joined before 8th November 2024 can vote if they have paid their membership subscription or completed the direct debit instructions.

What browsers can I use to access the voting site?

This site supports all common browsers such as Microsoft Edge, Internet Explorer, Chrome, Firefox, & Safari. If you encounter any difficulties with these or any other browsers, please send a report to support@uk-engage.org

Why am I unable to access the voting site?

There may be a local connectivity problem – try opening www.uk-engage.org or www.google.com – if these websites do not open it is most likely that your device is not connected to the internet. Initially you may want to try closing your browser and trying again, however, more serious cases may require you to reboot your device.

If your connection problems persist, please contact your Internet Service Provider (ISP) for further guidance.

What happens to my data?

Surrey Wildlife Trust has entered into an agreement to provide the following data to UK Engage in order to provide a way of verifying legitimate votes: full member name, postcode and membership number. This data will be sent via a secure data service and will not be used for any other purposes other than the management of the AGM voting service on behalf of Surrey Wildlife Trust.

Your individual votes cast are secure and will not be known by the Surrey Wildlife Trust. However, summarised voting data will be provided to Surrey Wildlife Trust.

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How do I know any details I submit will be kept secure?

The only data you will submit to UK Engage is your postcode and membership number. Once you have placed your vote, the vote is stored in their online voting system's ballot box and cannot be changed by any other voter within the system.

Related questions: [Where is my data stored?](#) [What happens to my data?](#)

Where is my data stored?

Surrey Wildlife Trust has signed a data agreement with UK Engage which precludes your data being passed on to third parties.

Related questions: [What happens to my data?](#)

How long will my data be kept for?

Member information used to administer the voting will be stored for up to 30 days after the declaration of result in case the voting result is challenged, after which it will be deleted.

Can I vote using my mobile device?

The site is optimised to work with most common mobile devices. If you experience any difficulties while using a smartphone or tablet to access the site, please try from another device or send a report to support@uk-engage.org

Why won't the voting system accept my Membership Number, Password (Postcode)

Make sure you have entered your membership number and password (which is your postcode) correctly. The password (postcode) is case sensitive and must be entered including the space e.g. GU24 0JN. For international members please enter the code in the correct format for your registered location. If you have any issues, please contact our [membership team](#).

There is a document on the website that I cannot open.

Throughout the site there are documents for you to view, such as notices and documents that have been saved as PDFs. In order to open any PDF documents on the website you will need to have Adobe Reader installed. It can be downloaded for free from the Adobe website.

Why are you asking me to vote?

Surrey Wildlife Trust is a membership organisation and members have the right to influence the activities of the Trust and take part in its governance. Members have the right to vote on resolutions set out in the Notice of the AGM.

What does appointing a proxy mean?

Members may appoint the Chair of the meeting or another person to participate in the meeting, including voting on their behalf. The appointed person is called a proxy. Usually, appointing a proxy is done by members who are unable to attend a meeting, but members who want to attend a meeting can still appoint a proxy to participate on their behalf if they wish. The Guidance for appointing a proxy is [here](#).

Why do I need to vote by proxy?

If you are not sure if you are able to attend the AGM, please place your proxy vote in advance. You can appoint the Chair of the meeting to vote on your behalf or another person. You can register your vote [online](#) or contact finance@surreywt.org.uk to request a paper proxy vote.

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Proxy votes must be received online by UK Engage or via the paper form by email to finance@surreywt.org.uk or by post to the Trust's Head Office at School Lane, Pirbright, GU24 0JN no later than 24 hours before the start of the AGM.

How do I vote by proxy?

You can assign a proxy to vote on your behalf online or by using a proxy form. If you do not have access online you can contact finance@surreywt.org.uk to request a paper proxy vote.

How will I know my proxy vote has been accepted?

Once you have confirmed your vote the last screen you will see has a large green circle with a tick in it. It will also say thank you for confirming your vote.

Can I vote on behalf of another member?

Yes. To be allowed to vote on behalf of another member, the voting member will have to appoint you as their proxy either [online](#) or by post before the deadline of 15th November at 10am.

If you are voting on someone's behalf in person, when you register at the venue you will be given additional instructions on how to vote on their behalf.

If you are voting on someone's behalf online during the live vote, UK engage will assign an additional vote to you at the relevant point.

How are you compiling the online and in-the-room votes?

Once we have collected and counted all the in-the-room and online votes, the company secretary will compile the votes and present them to the Chair to announce.

All votes will be double checked against the proxy list and the final count will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

Questions about attending online

I want to attend the AGM online, but don't have access to a computer

If you have your membership number, you can join the meeting online from anywhere, using the link you used to vote. So, if you have a friend or family member with a smart phone, tablet, iPad or computer you can access the meeting online or view the recording at a later date. Don't forget, you are very welcome to attend in person.

Is there help available for those who wish to attend online?

We have created a user guide to help members familiarise themselves with the voting system and the format of the meeting which will be available at the end of October.

We are also happy to help you on the phone or by email, so if you have any concerns about taking part online, please do not hesitate to contact us in advance of the meeting at events@surreywt.org.uk.

Will you send me a Zoom link?

There is no zoom link for the meeting. The link you will need is the same link you need to vote by proxy. Click [here](#) to be taken to ([Ukemeet](#)) where you can take part online.

You will need your membership number and postcode for joining the meeting.

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Will there be captions?

Yes. We will be using an automated caption service during the meeting so if there any issues with the sound, you will be able to read what is being said.

Questions about attending the AGM in person

What is the parking like at the venue?

The racecourse is located in a picturesque parkland setting in the town of Esher, Surrey. It is within the M25, easily accessed via the A3 and only 15 miles from South West London, with plentiful parking. From London, take the A3 and follow the brown venue signs to Sandown Park. Exit A3 on to the A307 and continue to follow the brown venue signs. Alternatively, from the M25, exit at Junction 10 and follow the A3 towards London then exit onto the A307 and follow the brown venue signs.

If using a Sat Nav, please enter 'Portsmouth Road' rather than the Sandown Park postcode – this will bring you to the main car park which is just off the A307 (Esher High Street) and is directly in front of the main entrance.

There is plenty parking available on site. There are allocated disabled parking spaces which are free of charge to all blue badge holders. The parking is very close to the main entrance.

Please note that there is another event taking place at the racecourse on the same day as the AGM so the car park may be a little busier than usual. Please allow plenty of time to arrive and park up before the AGM begins.

How do I pay for parking?

Parking is free if you are attending the AGM. You may see signs in the car park with a QR code but do not scan these! You do not need to pay for parking.

What's the Public transport like?

Sandown Park is located right next to Esher Train Station, which is just a ten minute walk from the racecourse entrances. Esher station allows onwards travel to London Waterloo from just 25 minutes, as well as Woking and Guildford to the south. Please check South Western Railway websites for the most up-to-date train times.

How do I register to attend?

We are always grateful for those who wish to register their attendance in advance, as this allows us to plan catering and staffing.

You can register to attend online or in person by completing the registration form here: [Annual General Meeting 2024 | Surrey Wildlife Trust](#) or by contacting us at events@surreywt.org.uk

Where do I find my membership number?

Your membership number can be found on the emails we have sent you about the AGM. If you do not receive emails, please contact our membership team at membership@surreywt.org.uk who will be happy to help.

Can I turn up or register on the day?

Absolutely. While we do encourage registering in advance (so we can order enough tea and cake), we appreciate that plans change at the last minute.

If you would like to attend in person, please arrive 10 minutes early so we can check your membership and voting status (if you have not already voted by proxy).

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Will there be any interesting speakers and talks this year?

We are delighted to confirm this year's talks will invite you to imagine a Nature Recovery Network that extends into every part of our towns, villages and countryside, bringing the benefits of a healthy natural world into every part of life. Flowers blooming along road verges, green roofs across towns, wildlife-friendly planting on new housing estates and whole communities gardening for wildlife.

The talks will explore our vision for Surrey and learn about how we can all feed in to deliver local nature recovery networks.

ADAM BROWN – SURREY LOCAL NATURE RECOVERY STRATEGY LEAD FOR SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

The Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Surrey will help us reverse nature loss by setting out where and how to manage land and water to create a network of nature-rich sites which are bigger, better managed and more joined-up across the county and across the country. Hear how SCC are working closely with organisations, people and communities across the county to shape and develop this Strategy.

JOHN MADDEN – LINGFIELD NATURE RESERVE

This thriving and biodiverse community Local Nature Reserve, run and managed by volunteers, was a recipient of one of our recent Community Champion Awards. Combining forces throughout the community to make a difference and demonstrating how landowners are critical for nature recovery, we will hear about what restoring nature in Surrey looks like on the ground for this local group.

AIMEE CLARKE – DIRECTOR OF ENGAGEMENT, SURREY WILDLIFE TRUST

We set ambitious nature recovery targets at SWT, which cannot be achieved alone. Hear how the power of people and partnerships is crucial, what can be achieved by working together and what part you can play as an individual.

Join us in our vital vision to restore Surrey's nature!

Will there be a hearing loop

Our technical team will be providing a hearing loop, so please speak to them on arrival so we can ensure you can hear everything.

Will there be a refreshment break?

Yes. There will be refreshments (including tea, coffee and cake) served after the AGM and before the staff talks. We will provide a selection of drinks and snacks for the following dietary requirements: gluten, nut and dairy free).

Can I bring in nuts?

No. We have a number of staff and members who have extreme allergies to nuts. So if you wish to bring in a snack, please ensure there are no nuts present.

Will there be anything to eat if I have allergies or a restricted diet?

We will ask the catering team to provide snacks for the following dietary requirements: gluten, dairy, and nut free. If you have any additional requirements, please let us know as soon as possible at events@surreywt.org.uk

Will there be an opportunity to meet staff and ask questions?

Yes. During the refreshment break, staff will be available and we invite you to come and ask us questions about our work.

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Will there be any Christmas cards on sale this year?

Yes. Our membership team will be displaying a selection of Christmas cards and other merchandise which you will be able to purchase using cash or card.

Can I bring a non-member with me?

If you require someone to assist you while attending the AGM, you are more than welcome to bring a non-member with you. Just please be aware that they will not be able to vote.

What happens if I cancel my membership between now and the AGM?

For you to be able to attend and vote at the AGM, you must be a subscribing member at the time of the meeting.

If you have voted by proxy before the meeting and subsequently cancel your membership, your vote will be discounted during the reconciliation of votes.

General governance questions

Why are you using an external company to manage the online and proxy voting?

Surrey Wildlife Trust works hard to ensure good governance and to ensure our members can participate fully in our Annual General Meeting, whether that be in person, online or by proxy.

Therefore, we have outsourced the management of online and proxy voting to UK Engage who have extensive experience in running elections, ballots and online voting. They will be handling all of the proxy voting for the AGM as well as the live online voting during the meeting. This will enable us to focus on running the technical aspects of the AGM and ensure the best possible experience for our members (whether they be attending online or in person).

Who are UK Engage?

UK Engage are a leading election services provider and member engagement specialist.

Acting as a trusted Independent Scrutineer or Returning Officer, they provide innovative and secure democratic voting services for elections, ballots, referendums, consultations, and AGMs.

Providing scrutineer services means that they are duty-bound to make sure they are meeting their obligations in terms of processes, people, data and system security.

Click on this link to [find out more](#) about UK Engage.

Asking questions at the AGM

Can I ask questions if I attend online?

To ask a question online, please use the Q & A feature to type your question, which will be read out by the Chair at the appropriate time.

Ask your question before the meeting

Before the meeting you can email us in advance at finance@surreywt.org.uk or submit a question via the proxy [voting](#) site.

Ask your question in person

To ask a question in person, please raise your hand and the Chair will direct a member of staff to bring you a roaming microphone for you to speak into.

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Who to contact if I have technical queries

A brief list of the most common technical problems is included below. UK Engage would urge you to attempt some of these troubleshooting methods first, as there is often a simple explanation to most technical queries. If your query cannot be resolved by following these suggestions, please contact UK Engage at support@uk-engage.org

We will need as much information as possible to investigate the problem, including:

- The name of the election and/or constituency in which you are entitled to vote;
- Your Unique Security Code (Membership number);
- Details of any error message you have received - please try to explain the error message accurately;
- The date and time you tried to vote;
- The browser that you are using (e.g. Microsoft Edge, Internet Explorer, Chrome, Firefox, Safari);
- What type of connection you are using (e.g. broadband, public Wi-Fi, 3G/4G).

Please email details of your technical query to support@uk-engage.org. We will investigate the problem and let you know what we find as soon as we can.