



PlantNetwork

The Plant Collections Network
of Britain & Ireland

Minutes of the Eighteenth Annual General Meeting

5.00 pm Tuesday 1st April 2014

Chatsworth House Derbyshire

(1) **Welcome**

Dr Matthew Jebb, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of PlantNetwork, welcomed all to the meeting.

(2) **Minutes of the Seventeenth Annual General Meeting**

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 11th April at Claire College Cambridge were approved and signed as a correct record.

(3) **Report for the year to 31 March 2014, by Matthew Jebb, Chairman of the Board**

Meetings: the following conferences and training meetings had been held in the year, with presentations and reports posted on the website.

Conference

11th to 12th April Urban Public Gardens at University of Cambridge

Training day meetings:

20th April Micropropagation at Duchy College, Cornwall.

5th June temperate Trees in a Lost Landscape at marks Hall Arboretum

Unfortunately the RHS trails hardiness rating training day at RHS Wisley 3rd July 2013 had to be cancelled due to insufficient bookings.

11th October managing an historic tree collection at Bute Park, Cardiff

27th November Websites and Social Media at English Heritage Office in York

Membership in the year had totalled 219, with 89 institutional members and 130 individual or personal members (including free membership for 15 Trainees on placements in gardens as part of the Historic and Botanic Garden Bursary Scheme or the Heritage Horticulture Skills Scheme). There were 31 personal members within institutions that are already members of PlantNetwork (at the special rate of £15/year; they receive their own copies of newsletters and other mailings). The Board was seeking to encourage more students to join. Institutional membership included all the staff at that garden or organisation.

Subscription rates for 'institutional' members increased by £5/year from April 2013 to £350/year for gardens with more than 20 staff, and £130/year for gardens with 20 or fewer staff.

Communication: the website (<http://www.plantnetwork.org>) continued to be a useful, open access resource. Conference and training day presentations were posted onto the website. Christopher Weddell was thanked for managing it well. Members were asked again to check the entry for their garden in the *PlantNetwork Directory of Botanical Collections in Britain and Ireland* and to feed back any useful resources we could share with members via our website.

Charitable purposes; Charges for meetings continue to be very competitive with comparable training days and we will continue to respond to members needs and suggestions for future training content. Student membership of PlantNetwork was offered at the low rate of £10/year.

(4) **Treasurer's report**

The Chairman presented a report based on information from Christopher Weddell Hon. Treasurer. Subscriptions cover just over half of basic running costs; they are set at low rates, to encourage as many botanic and historic gardens as possible to become members, it was recognised from the outset that subscription income alone would not cover expenditure. Conference budgets include a contribution towards

PlantNetwork overheads and administration. A sufficient amount had been set aside in reserves for PlantNetwork to run for at least a year should there be no further income.

Accounts for the year to 31 March 2014 had not yet been audited by Critchleys. Income from subscription amounted to £17 349. Surplus from the conference and forum meetings amounted to £4 309, sales on email mailouts brought in £2 565 and interest payments yielded £227. Outgoings comprised £30 849 in support costs and £1 860 in management costs. In Summary total income was £24 450 and total outgoings were £32 709, giving a net loss of £8 259. Total funds carried forward at year end amounted to £34 950. No grants were received during the 2013/14 financial year.

The Board has a *duty of care* and a *duty of prudence* in running PlantNetwork: policies on risk, financial reserves, and internet and email usage were reviewed regularly.

Critchleys, of Greyfriars Court, Paradise Square, Oxford, was appointed as auditor for a further year.

(5) **Election of officers to the Board of Trustees**

The Board for 2013–2014 had been: Matthew Jebb (Chairman), Pamela Smith (Vice-Chair, stepped down September 2013), Christopher Weddell (Hon. Treasurer), David Rae (Hon. President), Alistair Griffiths, David Knott, Edwin Mole, Mark Patterson, Faye Steer, Simon Toomer, Tim Upson (Vice Chair from September 2013), Rupert Wilson and Ian Wright.

The diversity in experience of Trustees brought a range of skills and expertise to the Board. The Articles of Association of the Company require one-third of Board members to retire at each AGM; they may stand for re-election. Tim Upson, Alistair Griffiths, Edwin Mole and Christopher Weddell stood down from the Board and were re-elected. Don Murray and Richard Barley were elected to the Board, unopposed. No other nominations had been received.

(6) Matthew thanked members and the Board of Trustees for their support to PlantNetwork over the past year.

The meeting closed at 5.35 pm.

PlantNetwork: The Plant Collections Network of Britain and Ireland is a company limited by guarantee, registered in England, number 3777793; registered charity 1081747. Registered office: PlantNetwork, c/o University Computing Service, New Museums Site, Pembroke Street, Cambridge CB2 3QH.