



PlantNetwork

The Plant Collections Network
of Britain & Ireland

Minutes of the Twentieth Annual General Meeting 2.00pm Thursday 12th May 2016 at The Eden Project

(1) **Welcome**

Simon Toomer, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of PlantNetwork, welcomed all to the meeting.

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

Minutes of the meeting held on 2.00 pm Wednesday 22nd July 2015 Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh were approved and signed as a correct record.

(3) **Report for the year to 31 March 2016, by Simon Toomer Chairman of the Board**

Meetings: the following conferences and training meetings had been held in the financial year April 2015 to March 2016 year, with presentations and reports posted on the website. 118 attendees to events.

Training days:

- What's growing here then? Plant Records meeting Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh. July 22nd 2015
- Tree safety: legislation and developing your policies. Yorkshire Arboretum. July 2nd and 3rd 2015.
- Seed collection and storage. Wakehurst Place. October 22nd 2015

Annual Conference 2016

- Plant Collections management; keeping it legal, ethical and relevant. Autumn conference Wollaton Hall, Nottingham. November 4th and 5th 2015.

(4) **Membership**

2015 – 16 membership year had totalled 167, with 51 institutional members and 116 individual or personal members The Board continued to seek horticultural colleges and students to become members.

Membership rates have been increased for the 2016 – 2017 membership year to: from £350 to £400 for a large organisation, £130 to £150 for a small organisation. Personal membership categories, including students, formerly ranged from £10 to £33 and now ranges from £15 to £40.

(5) **Communication**

The website, <http://www.plantnetwork.org>, and increasing use of social media continued to be a useful, open access resource. Christopher Weddell was thanked for supporting Pam Smith in managing the website.

From January 2016 we now circulated news via our email members list, this is both in response to member survey feedback on preferred methods of communication and also ensure we can be more proactive to sharing news and opportunities with our membership.

(6) **Charitable purposes**

Members were reminded of the Charitable and public benefit purpose of PlantNetwork. Charges for meetings continue to be very competitive with comparable training days and we continue to respond to members' needs and suggestions for future training events and website content.

(7) **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.

- (8) **Accounts for the year to 31 March 2016** had not yet due to be submitted to our auditors, Critchleys, Records to date show income from subscription amounted to £12,029. In summary total income, including income from conferences and training days was £39, 138 and total outgoings were £41,128, giving a net loss of £1, 900. An improvement on the previous year of a loss of £7,671. Total funds carried forward at year end amounted to £25,289. No grants were received during the 2015/16 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.

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

The Board for 2015–2016 had been: Simon Toomer (Chairman), Faye Steer (Vice-Chair), Christopher Weddell (Hon. Treasurer), Matthew Jebb (Hon. President), Richard Barley, David Knott, Edwin Mole, Don Murray, Mark Patterson, Faye Steer, Simon Toomer, Tim Upson and Rupert Wilson

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. Board members wishing to stand down and not seek re-election are Richard Barley and Mark Patterson. Rupert Wilson and Christopher Weddell stand down and wish to be re-elected to the Board.

Nominations have been received for new Board members Sara Redstone from Royal Botanic Garden Kew nominated by Richard Barley and Simon Toomer and Juliet Day from Cambridge Botanic Garden nominated by Beverley Glover and Tim Upson. No other nominations were received.

- (10) Simon thanked members and the Board of Trustees for their support to PlantNetwork over the past year.

The meeting closed at 2.30pm.