



Arboricultural Association
Minutes of the 52nd Annual General Meeting

held on Monday 10th September 2018 in the Alumni Auditorium, University of Exeter

Present:

AGM Panel Keith Sacre Chair
 Jaime Bray Vice Chair
 Stewart Wardrop CEO
 Laurence Vine-Chatterton Treasurer

Trustees Jonathan Cocking
 Alastair Durkin
 Simon Holmes
 Ian Murat

Staff Michael Sankus
 Navin Sehmi
 Kate Beamish
 Hanif Bhula
 Emma Hall (*minutes*)
 Stephen Hodsman
 Simon Richmond
 Paul Smith

Members *A list of the Members in attendance is available upon request from AA HQ*

Apologies: Rupert Baker, Ged Collins, Simon Holmes, Robin Jackson, John Robinson, Jacqueline Waring

(1) Welcome, by the Association Chairman

The Chairman welcomed and thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

(2) Apologies for absence

As listed above.

(3) Minutes of the 51st Annual General Meeting on 11th September 2017

The minutes were proposed for approval by Andy Poynter and seconded by Alastair Durkin. There were no matters arising.

(4) Receipt of the Reports of the Board of Directors, September 2017 - September 2018

It was proposed by Keith Sacre that the reports submitted and published could be taken as read and approved; this was agreed by the attendees. There were no questions. The reports were proposed for approval by Jim Quaife and seconded by Jonathan Cocking.

Reports submitted (*see Annual Report pages 4 - 11*):

- (a) Chairman**
- (b) Financial Performance (1st January 2017 to 31st December 2017)**
- (c) Professional Committee**
- (d) Education and Training Committee**
- (e) Media and Communications Committee**
- (f) Arboricultural Association Trading Limited**

(5) Receipt of the Summary Accounts of the Association for Financial Year 2017

Laurence Vine-Chatterton, the Association's Treasurer delivered a brief overview of the Association's finances for 2017 (*see Annual Report pages 12-15*).

The Chair asked whether there were any questions that emerge from the accounts; there were none. Jim Quaife proposed the accounts to be an accurate record, Jonathan Cocking seconded that.

(6) Presentation of the Budget and Performance for 2018 and Reforecast Data at 30th June 2018

The Treasurer presented a summary of the accounts and budget information, including the audit summary from the Auditors. The Association's revenue was £1.34 million for 2017 with a forecast of £1.4 million for 2018. The 2017 surplus at £47,000 was an improvement on last year's £19,000.

Most of the Association's reserves are tied up in the Malthouse property and the investment in the new computer system. Cashflow continues to be seasonal. However, there has been improvement due to the earlier collection of subscriptions, which make up 27% of the income. Subscriptions have also increased due to the increase in membership numbers.

Events such as Conference (11% of total income) and ARB Show (9% of total income) continue to rise and provide valuable income. Both AC (19% of total income) and Training & Certifications (16% of total income) are growing steadily. RC schemes revenue remain static and Publication's income is variable.

Expected growth for 2018 is up to £1.4 million with a current net profit forecast of £67,000. This would be roughly in line with budget and the recommendation in the Auditor's Report to firm up our financial position. Subscription's income is also currently above budget, which is due to increased membership numbers.

The Treasurer stated the importance of having a diversity of income sources as it is expected that subscription income may decrease over time. More income will need to be generated from training and other sources of revenue in order to further develop and strengthen the Association's financial stability as well as reducing the reliance upon the current sources.

Keith Sacre asked for any questions or comments:

Sarah Kiss asked for clarification of the Malthouse's decreasing value and the Treasurer confirmed that it was due to depreciation.

Caroline Davies asked a question about the Parliamentary Group membership costs and Stewart Wardrop said that he would answer this in his update.

Bill Anderson asked whether the Association pays tax and the Treasurer replied stating that the AA does not pay tax.

Keith Sacre thanked Laurence Vine-Chatterton on behalf of the Association for his continued support.

(7) Appointment of Auditors for 2018

Keith Sacre suggested that the Association reappoint Hazlewoods as auditors.

Navin Sehmi proposed the suggestion and Sarah Kiss seconded the proposal.

(8) Report of Retirement of Trustees during the period AGM 2017 - AGM 2018

From 10th September 2018, Jonathan Cocking, Ged Collins and Alastair Durkin will stand down as a result of retirement or resignation.

The Chair thanked them for their time, commitment and support to the Association during their time in office. The audience acknowledged this with a round of applause.

(9) Questions Received in Advance of the AGM

There were none.

(10) Election of Association Trustees for the term AGM 2018 - AGM 2019

There were six nominees for the election of three Trustee seats:

- ↵ Ged Collins
- ↵ Alastair Durkin
- ↵ Jenny Long
- ↵ Michelle Ryan
- ↵ Richard Trippett
- ↵ Jacqueline Waring

The votes recorded during the meeting, along with the proxy votes placed ahead of the meeting, were counted and presented to the Chair.

It was announced that Alastair, Jenny and Michelle were all successful in gaining a Trustee position.

Keith Sacre and Stewart Wardrop thanked Jonathan Cocking for all of his work as a Trustee and presented him with a certificate and gift. Ged Collins' contributions were acknowledged and his certificate and gift will be posted to him.

(11) Date and Venue of 53rd AGM

The next conference will be held at the University of Exeter on 9th September 2019.

(12) Any Other Business Relevant to the AGM

- i.) Henry Girling stated that about 14 months ago he had put forward the idea for a commemorative award for services to arboriculture. The late Bill Matthews was named yet there had been no action. Henry asked for an explanation as to why this was so.

Stewart Wardrop replied stating that he had contacted Bill in both December 2017 and February 2018 and was asked to wait. Other members of Bill's family were supposed to contact Stewart but sadly no response was received.

- ii.) Henry Girling asked for an update with regard to the landscaping at the Malthouse, which he had raised as a question at the 51st AGM.

Simon Richmond responded explaining that plans have been drawn up and there will be two phases of development. The first phase to prepare the land, which has already started, and the second to implement the planting.

- iii.) Henry Girling expressed his concerns with regard to the lack of public relations and reporting in the media. He noted that other organisations were reporting on items that are within the Association's remit and that we should be trying to get our name out there.

Stewart noted Henry's concerns and said that it is an area that we can work to improve. It has only been within the last 18 months that there has been somebody working full time in marketing. The Association's media presence has grown dramatically within that period and with a new 2 year apprentice due to start this growth can be built upon and expanded. This could be improved further by recruiting someone at Trustee level with both marketing and political skills but this would be dependent on finances. Stewart also commented that the government will invariably migrate to the large organisations first but that we will continue to get the Association's name out there.

Update from the C.E.O.

Stewart opened by recognising that 2017 had been a year of change with great losses to the industry in the past year: Rodney Helliwell, Derek Honour and Bill Matthews. There was a period of silence to remember their lives and contributions to the industry.

Stewart Wardrop summarised the main events and highlights. The Arb show 2017 had a record attendance which was then beaten in 2018 with a rise of 40%. Similarly, the numbers for the 2018 conference had increased again on the 2017 numbers.

In membership, after a relatively static period (2014-2016) there was growth of 7% in 2017 and it is still continuing to grow at roughly that same rate. There has been a marked increase in the number of student members from 70 a year ago to 400. In October 2018 the first student conference will be delivered. It is hoped that this will be a success, which can then be repeated and built upon.

The Arb Magazine is now available digitally and last year a small investment was made to take it overseas, which has helped promotion.

Stewart reiterated Laurence's points that finances were tracking on budget and the importance of continued growth and investment in the Association. Next year, we plan to have a large investment in the Membership scheme to enable us to implement a 'rolling renewal' programme. This will help to move the renewal period away from December. It was also noted that whilst we continue to attract new members, attrition of current members needs to be addressed. The introduction of the direct debit system has already appeared to improve the scheme membership attrition rates, with loss being reduced from 7% to less than 1%.

Politically, the Association has contributed to a research paper, which scopes the size of the horticulture industry. The paper cost the All Party Parliamentary group £60,000 to which an Arboricultural Association contribution of £6,000 was made. This paper shows the government how important our industry is and concludes by asking the government to recognise this and invest in the industry.

We are also members of the Ornamental Horticultural Round Table Group, which meets quarterly.

Actions have also been taken to engage more of our Branches. A Branching Out event was held in June 2018 and since then the Association has set challenges to the more active Branches. The aim is to get increased membership engagement through our branches to help put on events and we also have a support network at The Malthouse that can now assist and contribute. Cornwall have been particularly successful already with 60 people attending an event yet there are only 39 members in that region.

To the Trustees and the Committees thanks for their time, questioning, challenging and helping towards the implementation of the new strategy, which is testament to what the Association strives to do.

Stewart expressed a vote of thanks to the HQ staff have undergone a period of transformation. There are 13 members of staff, 7 of which have less than 18 months of experience. Special thanks to Simon and Olivia for organising and arranging the conference.

Thanks to the audience.

Presentation to Keith Sacre

Keith has finished his term as chair Jaime thanked Keith for all of his contributions, support and hard work as Chairman of the Arboricultural Association. Presentation was made.

Keith thanked everyone.

Meeting Closed