

LONDON NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Society held on Thursday December 3rd 2015 in Room 1.47 at the Royal School of Mines, Imperial College at 6.30pm.

The President, Helen Baker, was in the Chair.

Treasurer, Mike West. Secretary David Howdon. Minuting Secretary, Angela Linnell.

There were 28 members and guests present.

The President first of all apologised to those present for the non-arrival of the relevant papers before the AGM. This was due partly to lateness on our part but mainly due to our printers being exceptionally busy. Copies were handed out before the start of the meeting.

1 **Apologies for absence** had been received from Jan Dobbie, Jo Hatton, Mick Massie, John Swindells and Michael Wilsdon.

2 **Minutes of the AGM for 2014.**

The motion to approve the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on December 1st 2014 as a true and accurate record was then proposed by John Edgington, seconded by Robin Blades and approved *nem con*.

3 **Annual Report and Statement of Accounts for July 1st 2014 to June 30th 2015**

David Howdon thanked the President for all her hard work during the year, particularly the work on the new Constitution. The draft Rules were now virtually completed and would need to be examined by the Charity Commission and should be ready for approval by members at the next AGM in December 2016. He thanked all the Society Officers and members for their work and in particular Michael Wilsdon for his work on Administration and Finance.

Membership was still in decline and stood at 874 on 1 October 2015. He suggested that we all recruit one new member – which of course would double our strength. Catherine Schmitt said that she had membership leaflets for anyone who would like to take them. It was reported that the Botany Section was undertaking a new Flora and the London Bird Club was working on a new birds Atlas. It was reported that the Botany Section would undertake a new Flora and that Ecology and Entomology proposed to update our survey on the Butterflies of London, which was published in 1986. The London Bird Club had published the *London Bird Report 2012* and *London Bird Report 2013*, during the year and was now up-to-date with publication and the 2014 edition was under way: great thanks were due to Pete Lambert and his team. The Club had organised many indoor and outdoor meetings during the year and David Campbell is the new Recorder for Surrey. We also have a new Editor for the *London Naturalist* and David welcomed Nick Rutter. He thanked Keith Hyatt for his contribution to the *London Naturalist* over many years and he was presented with a cheque, in recognition of his sterling work. He also thanked David Allen for all his work on the Library and urged members to use it.

Mike West gave the Treasurer's report. He said the Society's net assets at £338,929 were virtually unchanged from last year, when they stood at £339,670. The amount received from subscriptions was down to about £15,000 from about £16,000 in 2014. However, the Charities Fixed Interest Fund income had increased from £6,682 to £7,092. Total receipts had slightly decreased from £35,340 in 2013/14 to £34,252 in 2014/15. He said that the reason for the very large apparent increase in expenditure on hire of halls from one year to the next was down to the fact that we paid the 2013/2014 invoice for The LookOut in Hyde Park venue for the London Bird Club in the same period as the 2014/2015 invoice. This is because we inadvertently failed to pay it when first presented and the venue didn't chase it, so it was paid at about the same time as the 2014/2015 invoice, in July 2014, (and just fell into the current accounting period). Additionally, we rapidly paid early for the venue hire for most of the 2015/2016 period as Kat Duke had successfully negotiated the old price for the coming talks in the face of another proposed price rise, but payment had to be rushed through in May 2015, just before the start of the next accounting period. So three sets of payments were made in one accounting period. An alternative venue is now being considered for the 2016/2017 programme onwards.

There were additional costs during the year as two *London Bird Reports* were published. The *London Bird Reports* had cost more again because there were more pages, and there was a designer's fee of £757 for the 2013 edition, where formerly this was done without payment. The LNHS Newsletter had cost more but this was thought to be because of an increase in the total number of pages printed, which would be limited in future years. He thanked Mark Burgess for the quality of the Newsletter. The new mailing arrangements had been very effective – until this week when the AGM papers were delayed because the printers were very busy. He also recorded his thanks to Robin Blades for his handling of members' subscription payments.

The Report was proposed by David Howdon, seconded by Mike West and approved *nem con*.

4 To elect the Officers and other members (other than Section representatives) to serve on Council in 2016

Role	Nominee(s)
President	Vacant
Treasurer	Mike West
Secretary	David Howdon
Members other than Section representatives. Ten to be elected.	
	Robin Blades
	John Edgington
	Kat Duke
	Jan Hewlett
	Keith Hyatt
	Maria Roberts
	Catherine Schmitt

The election of these Officers and other members to serve as trustees was passed *en bloc*. It was noted that Gehan de Silva had been elected as LBC Chairman and representative on Council at the LBC AGM on November 18th 2015. Sarah Barnes, David Bevan and Stuart Cole had been re-elected to serve as Ecology and Entomology, Botany and Bookham Common Survey representatives respectively at their Section AGMs. They are also Trustees.

If a new President is found during the year, Council has the power to fill the vacancy.

5 To elect a new Independent Examiner for 2015-6. Mike West said that the Charity Commission regulations specify that the Examiner must be a named individual. He therefore proposed that we appoint Ralph Sears of Meyer Williams. This was approved *nem con*.

6 Any other business

Helen Baker thanked all members of Council and Officers for their hard work during the year. She mentioned in particular Jo Hatton who had just completed five years on Council and therefore had to stand down. She stressed the need for more volunteers to come forward and help run the Society.

Kat Duke thanked Helen Baker for all her hard work during the year, particularly for revising the LNHS rules and attending the Committee meetings.

The meeting was followed by an address, at the invitation of the President, by Professor Ben Sheldon, Director of the Edward Grey Institute, Department of Zoology, University of Oxford on the long term Wytham Wood Great Tit study.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm.