

# BRITISH CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

Minutes of the Board of Trustees ("The Board") Meeting, held on Saturday 26th May 2018 at 11.00 a.m.  
at the Holiday Inn, Milton Keynes, Bucks.

<u>Trustees Present:</u>	Mr Ian Thwaites (ITh)	Chairman
	Dr Jim Gibbs (JG)	Vice Chairman
	Mr David Kirkbright (DK)	Treasurer
	Mr Barry Tibbetts (BT)	Shows Committee Representative
	Mrs Alice Vanden Bon (AVB)	Technical Editor
	Dr Tony Mace (TMa)	Publications Officer
	Mr Bill Hildyard (BH)	Forum & Website Administrator
	Mrs Suzanne Mace (SM)	Committee
	Dr Hazel Taylor (HT)	Committee
<u>Co-opted Annual Trustee present:</u>	Mr Graham Evans (GE)	Committee
<u>Other Officers in attendance:</u>	Mr Tony Morris (TM)	Membership Secretary
	Dr Alan Bromley (AB)	Marketing Officer
	Mr Al Laius (AL)	Journal Editor

## FINAL

### 18/14 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Mr Eddy Harris (EH)

Secretary & Trustee

Mr John Arnold (JA)

Legal Advisor & Trustee

The Board unanimously sent its good wishes to John Arnold and his family in the circumstances that prevented him from attending the meeting.

### 18/15 MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 3<sup>rd</sup> FEBRUARY 2018

As there were no further corrections since our last meeting, an agreed copy of the minutes was formally signed by Mr Thwaites.

### 18/16 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

**18/05 13 – Convention** - AVB to establish if Peter Arthurs would print the colour page for the Convention folder and supply the machine for binding the folders. Alternatively John Arnold to ask Graham Charles if he could produce the folders.

AVB indicated that Graham Charles has volunteered to take this on. Inclusion of the list of delegates in the folders was discussed and it was agreed it should be included.

**ACTION: AVB to finalise and ask Graham Charles to issue BY: 12 July 2018**

**18/07 - Management of reserves:**

BT to obtain costings in relation to the library project.

**COMPLETE**

The Board noted a confidential report received from the prospective Trustees of the Trust that is to be established regarding the library project and agreed to continue to monitor this project at each future Board meeting. **ACTION: EH to add to future Board agendas. BY: 12 July 2018 for the August meeting**

EH to receive and forward to the Board members proposals for projects received from branches and zones in response to the March *CactusWorld* piece. As the deadline for submission is 30 June, this was deferred to the next meeting. **ACTION: EH BY: 12 July 2018**

HT to update her paper on reserves for consideration at the next meeting and to initiate a piece for *CactusWorld* explaining what projects the BCSS are proposing to carry out using the accumulated reserves, to ask for members for their views and further ideas on how to use the reserves for the best value to the BCSS and its members. This item was deferred to the next meeting.

**ACTION: HT BY: 6 August 2018**

**18/08 - Tone from the top** – AVB to liaise with AL regarding producing a news bulletin from the Board of Trustees for inclusion in *Cactusworld*. As ITh will be producing a piece for *CactusWorld* explaining his vision for the BCSS as incoming Chairman, in the September edition, it was agreed that this be deferred to the December *CactusWorld*, at which point it can be positioned as a regular progress report on the key points from that vision, with care taken to avoid duplication with the minutes.

**ACTION: AVB/AL/ITh BY: 10 October 2018**

**18/09** – DK to write to the auditors regarding the accounting issue. **COMPLETED**  
Further discussion of this issue is recorded under Minutes point 18/24.

**18/11** – SM to contact both Andy Palmer and a new volunteer Colin McKellar regarding taking over as Seed Purchaser starting for the season 2020. SM reported that she has spoken to Andy Palmer who is willing to take on the role but is going to speak to David Rushforth to find out current status, as 2019 has already been done. There was a discussion of the undesirability of incorrect names appearing on the seed list and seed packets, but re-working all the labels is a major piece of work. While it was acknowledged that it would be better if members could actually buy the seed online on the website, this poses significant difficulties given the payments systems we use. It was agreed that we should put an up-to-date reference list on the website and say on the seed list that members should refer to the website for this information.

**ACTION: AVB/BH BY: 1 December 2018**

**18/17 Chairman’s Introduction – ‘About me, my beliefs and my aspirations’**

- 1. Background in the hobby** – Mr Thwaites introduced himself and explained that he began collecting plants at an early age, initially attracted by an advertisement for a show and then encouraged by key people in his local branch, who became close friends. He began attending meetings to learn more about the plants and how to grow them. Discussion with others was more important than the (often dry and technical) speaker. However in today’s world, you can obtain that kind of knowledge using your phone on the train and it is no longer necessary to attend a meeting with like-minded people, even though that still adds an extra dimension to the enjoyment of the plants and remains valuable.
- 2. Modern uses of cacti and succulents** – Today there are important uses of our plants for internal décor and display. Many growers use windowsills, coldframes, outdoor space next to a wall/partly sheltered, or indoors under lights. We need to provide for their needs, including propagation, eg Echeverias from leaves. The Journal is world-class, but does not contain much of this type of material. Some people in the Society, including some on the Board, do grow in these ways, so the expertise is available to us. A book, “Succulents” by Robin Stockwell and the “Surreal Succulents” nursery (<https://surrealsucculents.co.uk/>) were noted as references on this topic.
- 3. Make BCSS synonymous with growing cacti and other succulent plants – worldwide.** Only the German Society is bigger than us and Germany has lagged behind on the modern use of cacti and succulents described above.
- 4. Make BCSS synonymous with cactus and succulent research and conservation,** including study of the plants in the wild. This means supporting horticultural students, journalists and anyone else engaging in these activities. Stronger working relationships with Kew, who are visiting South Africa again towards the end of this year, will be important here. In return we would expect video blogs and social media interaction from the students to communicate, in particular, with their age group.
- 5. Name and logo of the BCSS** – As we seek a worldwide audience, do we need “British” in our name? Consensus of the meeting was that we do not. However, Dr Mace alerted us to the difficulty of obtaining and registering internet domain names that are suitable and the need to buy up relevant names ahead of any name change. The implications for our Charity Commission registration and any other legal issues need to be researched. The Board agreed to consider this as an agenda item at the next meeting.

**ACTION: EH By: 10 July 2018**

Mr Thwaites said that our logo is now somewhat dated and that it is rather complex and “busy” in style, not in line with modern logos. We should change to one that is simple and attractive to younger people. The Board agreed that we would seek three different designs from graphic designers for consideration at the next meeting.

**ACTION: ITh BY: 4 August 2018**

- 6. More shows and displays to attract new people** – Mr Thwaites said that this would be a great way to bring in new members of the BCSS. It would help to integrate our online members with our members who only attend meetings, bridging the existing gulf. Meetings provide a forum for people to benefit from the years of experience of those who typically attend meetings. Mr Evans said that meetings might not appeal very much to a younger audience and this may mean they need to evolve their approach. Publicity materials could be produced to use in displays, eg a display unit of 3mx3m size, which collapses down to bin size for transportation, costs only £490 including printing. Logistics of moving these re-usable displays around the country to the next event would be the main issue to address, although couriers are not too expensive these days.

- 7. BCSS digital offerings** – It is essential that our new website is up and running by September at the latest. This is our window onto the online world, where most people today interact on information about cacti and succulents. The slide library and digital presentations library could be made available to people to view online so they do not have to go to a meeting to receive the information they contain. This helps to bridge the gulf between what we offer online members, compared with those that go to meetings, with about 25% of the membership not providing an email address. Dr Mace said that traffic is fairly light on our server and that it could therefore accommodate digital programmes on demand. Making the Journal available electronically in searchable form via OCR scanning would be desirable, available to members or at a charge. Dr Gibbs suggested we should scan from today backwards so the most recent Journals are available first. We need to check this does not conflict with our agreement with JSTOR, who have a licence for the Journals.

**ACTION: AL BY: 4 August 2018**

- 8. Payment mechanisms** – Mr Thwaites led a discussion about payment mechanisms used by the BCSS. Switching to Direct Debits for membership would increase the chance of renewal as most people do not cancel them. Over half of all renewals are paid by cheque and 600 had to be chased to renew this year. Mr Kirkbright advised that there are two possible companies providing a Direct Debit service. “Go Cardless” charge £600 per year to show the BCSS name on the bank statement, plus 20p/£12 payment and 40p/£40 payment. “EasyPay” charge 40p/transaction, still slightly more than PayPal, but do not show the name.

Regarding taking money at shows and events, it is possible to have a mobile pay terminal at a cost of £14/month, but previously this was given up because of the logistics of carrying it around to where it is required. The BCSS website virtual PayPal terminal can be used and the new website will have an online shop. The Board agreed to re-design the renewal and initial subscription forms adding a section for Direct Debit, with effect from December 2018 renewals. This approach would also reduce the need to take cash and card payments at events. Branches will need to destroy all their old stocks. An 8-fold leaflet was recommended for initial subscribers to accommodate advertising of what the BCSS has to offer.

Leaflet - **ACTION: AVB BY: 10 October 2018**

Direct debits - **ACTION: DK by 12 August 2018**

- 9. Trustees’ liability** – Mr Thwaites said it would be appropriate to buy insurance for the Trustees and Mr Kirkbright said he had obtained a quote of £112 from Hiscox to cover all the Trustees. The Board agreed to proceed with this.

**ACTION: DK BY: 12 August 2018**

Mr Thwaites raised the question of whether the BCSS should incorporate to limit liability further. Dr Taylor advised that this would increase the accounting requirements considerably. There would also be legal aspects to consider. The Board decided to take no action on this at the present time.

- 10. Mr Thwaites’ priorities** – Mr Thwaites explained that cacti and other succulent plants, the hobby and the BCSS were extremely important to him personally and took priority over almost everything else, but that his family would always come first in his life in the event of any conflict.

### **18/18 Member benefits**

Mr Thwaites proposed that a membership card be issued in the March Journal to all members who have renewed for the current year. Mrs Vanden Bon to check with the printers how we can get this done as a Journal insert, with different colours each year. **ACTION: AVB BY: 10 August 2018**

This will facilitate giving members' benefits such as entrance to partner gardens. Other benefits are currently under discussion with Kew, the RHS (at the most senior level) and with commercial enterprises such as Two Wests and Elliott, who could then put "supporters of the BCSS" on their website. ITh invited further ideas for member benefits for the next meeting. The Board are aware that under Gift Aid rules, member benefits may not exceed 25% of the membership subscription, but the Journal and Bradleya are covered as part of the BCSS primary purpose of education. Regarding other benefits, these are provided by other organisations rather than directly by the BCSS.

Provide more ideas for member benefits:

**ACTION: ALL BY: 11 August 2018**

### **18/19 Social media**

1. **Facebook** – Mr Thwaites led the discussion on this item, referring to the Facebook report in Appendix 1. ITh paid tribute to Mr Hildyard and his small team that works on our Facebook page, on which we have 6,600 followers. He likened Facebook interactions as like having a chat with people at a social venue, so it is not a place to place adverts. Branches are not generally using Facebook to publicise their events, but when Bromley put their Show on the local community Facebook page for the village, it attracted a number of local visitors to the Show. Follow-up included posting pictures taken at the Show. Leveraging local community groups in this way is recommended. While some branches have their own Facebook pages, there is not yet sufficient integration of these with the main BCSS Facebook.
2. **Zones** would sound more attractive if they had a name rather than a number and each zone should ultimately have a Social Media champion. **ACTION: JG/ITh BY: 30 June 2018**
3. **YouTube** - The Board agreed that we should launch a YouTube BCSS channel and approved an initial investment of £1,000 to produce 5 short videos as a beginning to work from. Dr Bromley was tasked with carrying out this work, ensuring professional production and editing and also fully taking on board the desire for a young, dynamic content as much as possible.
4. **Twitter & Instagram** – all were encouraged to tweet about cacti and succulents using the #bcss hashtag, linking to Instagram where possible. Tweets need a picture to get noticed. It is important to re-tweet as much as possible, particularly tweets from the BCSS, because that is what promotes a following. Whereas Twitter is used by professionals like journalists, Instagram is popular with young people. Pinterest is of limited use as it only has pictures.

Provide assistance with re-tweeting:

**ACTION: ITh BY: 30 June 2018**

Ask the membership of the BCSS for assistance with Social Media via a Journal piece:

**ACTION: ITh BY: 10 July 2018**

### **18/20 Electronic Decision Recording**

No electronic decisions were reported in the meeting, but there had been an inadvertent omission in that Mr Graham Evans had been co-opted as a member of the Board of Trustees by electronic decision-making subsequent to the AGM. The tenor of the meeting was that the Board welcomed Mr Evans to the Board and looks forward to his contribution.

### **18/21 Communications (including any award nominations).**

No new award proposals were reported in the meeting. One potential award was discussed and it was agreed that this would be decided by electronic decision-making after the meeting so that those Trustees who were absent from the meeting can participate. **ACTION: EH BY: 10 July 2018**

### **18/22 GDPR Compliance**

The various documents that Dr Taylor kindly prepared were discussed and a number of mainly minor alterations to the wordings of the Guidance Notes, Privacy Policy and Compliance document were agreed. **ACTION: HT BY: 3 June 2018**

A question was raised about the Secretary's BCSS email address, which sometimes seems to go unanswered and could consequently present a risk to dealing correctly with data requests. Dr. Mace

explained the Society's domain name was occasionally unreliable due to blacklisting, which led to discussion of possible solutions, including gmail, purchasing a new domain name or using an external server.

**ACTION: TM & AB BY: 10 July 2018**

It was agreed that the MailChimp sign-up form be reviewed to ensure it fits with our approach to GDPR compliance and decide any further action to be taken.

**ACTION: HT & AB  
BY: 30 June 2018**

It was accepted that the Privacy Policy needed to include wording on the following:

- The information that is collected on volunteers and visitors
- Occasional collection of sensitive personal data, such as dietary requirements and medical conditions in relation to people who are attending events

and that the wording about sensitive personal data should also be included in the Guidance Notes for branches and officials. Mr Kirkbright confirmed the Gift Aid marker had been removed from the membership database in order not to show whether or not a member paid tax. Dr Taylor will redraft the Privacy Policy section accordingly.

**ACTION: HT BY: 3 June 2018**

The Society's use of cookies on its website meant it was covered by the Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations ("PECR") and had to comply. An appropriate notification was already contained on the website. Mr Hildyard to confirm the new website is compliant with PECR.

**ACTION: BH BY: 10 July 2018**

The GDPR Compliance paper was approved subject to a few small changes and the action points therein will be followed and their resolution documented in the main Board meeting minutes going forward.

**ACTION: EH BY: until completion of the action points** Mr

Thwaites thanked Dr Taylor for her considerable work in producing the documents and this was echoed by the Board members.

## **18/23 Technical Update**

Dr Taylor provided a paper based on her attendance at a Charities Conference run by a training firm for Chartered Accountants (Appendix 2).

- 1 The Trustees' key responsibilities under the Charity Governance Code were clarity of purpose, openness, accountability, integrity and diversity and these were balanced by risk and control. There was some discussion about diversity, given the narrow demographic of the Board members. In relation to openness and transparency, the recording of matters that included confidential or potentially sensitive information, eg the library project, would continue to need careful handling.

**ACTION: HT (current minutes) & EH (ongoing)**

Mr Thwaites asked for an agenda item for future meetings on research funds available and amounts spent to track our progress on this primary purpose of the BCSS. **ACTION: EH BY: 10 July 2018**

- 2 Dr. Taylor stated the Society was in the top 20% of charities by income based on the Government's "Taken on Trust" report and was close to the £100k threshold for registration with the Fund Raising Regulator, which would commit the Society to open and transparent fundraising. It was agreed that paying the annual registration fee of £50 for charities below the £100,000 threshold was sensible.

**ACTION: HT (research) & DK (registration) BY: 11 July 2018**

Post-meeting note: Subsequent to the meeting, Mr Evans agreed to carry out the research part of this action point instead of Dr Taylor given her current workload for the Board. **ACTION: GE**

There was discussion of the Gift Aid and VAT rules for charities and it was agreed that guidance would need to be issued in due course to Zones and Branches covering a range of financial aspects, especially VAT. It was agreed a single document would be produced covering all these financial aspects.

**ACTION: HT & JG**

**BY: to be determined at the next meeting**

Separate guidance would also be required on the use of social media by branches and zones. Further discussion on this was deferred until the next meeting.

Mr. Kirkbright confirmed that he closely monitors VAT requirements on central BCSS activities and that VAT was charged on all advertising and no separate arrangements were in place for (the

very few) overseas advertisers, ie everybody was charged the same rate. Dr. Taylor noted that VAT was payable on electronic publications, which included talks on digital media.

#### **18/24 Accounting issue – the way forward**

A response had been received from the auditors in which they did not disagree with Dr Taylor's technical analysis of the issues.

It was agreed there was no need to amend the BCSS Rules, despite the auditors' recommendation, as the Rules already require the branches and zones to submit their accounts to the Treasurer on request at any time. The question of reporting timescales to meet deadlines for submission to the Charity Commission and approval prior to the Society AGM were an issue that would need to be resolved. In future, all Branches and Zones would have to submit formal accounts for inclusion in the Society's submission to Charity Commission the following October. Guidance to branches and zones, to include data requirements and timescales, would be issued once independent professional guidance had been received. A suitable template for the returns, commensurate with the Charity Commission's required format, would be required for the current year and for any previous years that had to be restated.

**ACTION: HT with assistance of suitably qualified accountants in branches.**

**BY: to be determined following professional advice**

The roll out would need careful communication, making very clear the absolute necessity while being handled with some sensitivity.

**ACTION: ITh**

In terms of the accounting issues, Dr Taylor offered to take the lead in resolving matters subject to two overriding requirements, both of which were agreed. These were (a.) the co-operation and full support of the Treasurer (who agreed to consolidate but not collect Branch/Zone data) and the Board and (b.) that independent professional advice was sought to confirm the accounting treatment of branches, on the restatement of prior years' accounts and handling any issues arising with HMRC. Provisions of support and assistance:

**ACTION: DK and all Board members**

**BY: ongoing**

Mr. Thwaites volunteered to take responsibility for notifying Branches and Zones and deal with any resulting fallout.

**ACTION: ITh BY: to be determined following professional advice**

It was agreed to approach two leading accountancy firms specialising in charities and charity HMRC issues about the restatement of prior accounts, with a view to retaining one of them. They would be given Dr Taylor's technical analysis and the historical background to the situation, explaining why the BCSS were convinced for so many years that branches did not need to be included in the accounts, but no proposals regarding the number of years that need restating nor interactions with HMRC. Mr Thwaites would review and approve the brief to be given to the accountants following the initial contact. The suggested firms were MacIntyre Hudson and Crowe Clark Whitehill.

**ACTION: HT BY: end June 2018**

Work with the Branches and Zones would be undertaken with the help of a small network (to be established) of branch treasurers with accounting experience.

**ACTION: HT BY: to be determined following professional advice**

Mr. Kirkbright expressed concern that Branches might react badly to the changes and declare themselves independent charities. It was noted that, under the BCSS Rules, any Branch so doing would need to return all monies they might hold to the Society as these were BCSS funds and start afresh financially.

There was discussion about whether the BCSS might pay any branch VAT that might arise centrally rather than charging individual branches. It was felt that central payment would effectively subsidise those branches that already had the most money and was therefore not desirable. It was also observed that the nature of branch sales (with independent sales leading to donations) and the classification of shows as fundraising activities and conventions as educational and research events may make these Branch/Zone activities exempt or out of scope for VAT and that independent professional advice would be helpful on this point.

#### **18/25 Society badges**

It was reported that we only have around 100 badges left and that prices have increased dramatically since we last had badges made. The cost is now £3.50 per badge for a batch of 2,000 and to cover postage and other costs they would cost £5.06 each. AS we are planning to change the BCSS logo, it was agreed to aim for one design for the logo and the badge and to re-consider the production of the badges when the three designs are considered at the next meeting (ref: item 18/17 5.)

18/26

**Item arising from the AGM minutes – proposed seed packet restriction from Peter Lewis’ report**

The meeting considered the matter raised in the Seed Distributor’s report at the AGM regarding restricting the number of packets that may be bought by one person. It was agreed that seeds of individual species be restricted to three per person, but that sets of 20 could be unrestricted, provided that the Seed Distributor can ensure that the choicest seeds that run out quickly are not included in the sets. Mr Morris to speak to Peter Lewis to confirm this point. Overall the Board wants the BCSS to sell seed, without large amounts left over at the end of the season, so restrictions should be kept to a minimum.

**ACTION: TMo BY: 10 August 2018**

It was agreed that in future a free copy of *CactusWorld* will be provided to one of the seed producers in lieu of payment for seeds.

**ACTION: TMo BY: 10 August 2018**

18/27

**Society website update**

The website report is provided in Appendix 3. Mr Hildyard reported that the outstanding items were being worked on, but that the limiting factor was the completion of the membership database, which is being managed by Mr Kirkbright, who said that he had heard nothing further from the developers since two months ago. Mr Hildyard to contact the developer Pedalo, to find out the status on this.

**ACTION: BH BY: end June 2018**

All involved need to provide the outstanding material still required as set out in Mr Hildyard’s report (further detail provided in Appendix 3):

Decide how to transfer Ralph Martin’s database to the new site	<b>ACTION: TM (end June)</b>
Provide current list of branches	<b>ACTION: JG (end June)</b>
Privacy Policy	<b>ACTION: HT (3 June)</b>
Send images to put on the online shop to Dr Mace	<b>ACTION: AVB/AL (end June)</b>
Provide images about research and conservation	<b>ACTION: JA (end July)</b>
Update the research material	<b>ACTION: JA (end July)</b>
Branch resources	<b>ACTION: JG (end June)</b>
Speakers and Judges details	<b>ACTION: JG (end July)</b>
Contacts	<b>ACTION: JG (end July)</b>
Members and resources – improve attractiveness/content	<b>ACTION: AB (end July)</b>
“From the BoT” Mr Thwaites’ Mission Statement	<b>ACTION: AVB (end December)</b>
Work out how to regularly refresh the front page with new images (say) two-weekly	<b>ACTION: BH (end July)</b>
Publicise to members in the Journal and in the email newsletter when the new website goes live.	<b>ACTION: AVB/AB after go-live</b>

**18/28 To appoint a Treasurer for the coming year**

The Chairman asked Mr Kirkbright if he was willing to stand for the position again this year and he confirmed that he was. The Board thanked Mr Kirkbright for his many years of selfless service and agreed unanimously to appoint Mr Kirkbright as Treasurer for the coming year.

18/29

**Updates and other points from the reports of Officers**

- 1 Treasurer’s report – Appendix 4. Mr Kirkbright said that he now has 99 confirmed reservations (including speakers) for the Convention, 9 non-resident and 9 day bookings for Saturday. This is 30 less than the last Convention. As Mr Kirkbright is now unable to attend, Mr Thwaites and Mr Charles will take over the announcements and cover Mr Kirkbright’s other tasks at the Convention.
- 2 Editor’s report – Appendix 5. Mr Laius advised that JSTOR no longer require a physical copy of Cactusworld.  
**ACTION: TMo BY 10 July 2018**
- 3 Technical Editor’s report – Appendix 6. Mrs Vanden Bon said that the plastic covers for the Journals are single-use plastic items, but the alternative cornstarch product only has a shelf life of ten months and so is not acceptable to the printers. They have however said the ones they use are biodegradable and we can put a logo on it that says so. David Quail to revert on this after the June Journal run.

**ACTION: AVB to report back BY: 10 August 2018**

Mr Morris said that the envelopes we use to send out new members' packs are not recyclable, but we have 2,000 to use up. It was agreed that we would use existing stock and transition to recyclable envelopes as soon as possible.

- 4 Publication Officer's report Appendix 7. Regarding the request by the Alpine Garden Society to sell copies of Gordon Rowley's "Succulents in Cultivation – breeding new cultivars" to their members at a discount, in principle the Board agreed to accept some loss and Dr Mace will now find out from the Alpine Garden Society what offer they are prepared to make.

**ACTION: TM BY: 4 August 2018**

- 5 Marketing Officer's report – Appendix 8. Dr Bromley advised that there is an event for schools at Wisley on 21 September – the 'Green-Plan-It' initiative (<https://schoolgardening.rhs.org.uk/11-19-years/Green-Plan-It>) which is expected to be low key and would welcome representation from the BCSS with a display of some good plants. This falls within the Shows Committee remit.

**ACTION: BT BY: 24 June 2018**

There was a brief discussion of the draft Marketing Strategy which was extremely well-received.

- 6 Shows Committee Report – Appendix 9. Mr Tibbetts said that the Shows Committee had asked if expense claims for travel by car could be increased to 45p/mile. The Board deferred consideration of this as it would affect everyone and not just the Shows Committee. Regarding the venue for the National Show, Mr Tibbetts and Mr Kirkbright are now exploring the possibility of the MK Arena. It is close to the city centre, has adequate parking and is used when there is a football match.

**ACTION: BT&DK BY: 10 August 2018.**

Mr Tibbetts noted the great achievement by Southfield Nurseries on winning best exhibit in the Pavilion and by Ottershaw Cacti on winning gold on their first appearance, both at the Chelsea Flower Show this year. The Board expressed their congratulations to both.

- 7 Vice-Chairman's report Appendix 10. It was confirmed that South Norfolk branch has closed and the Board agreed to this. Members will transfer to Norwich branch unless they express another preference.

## **18/30 Any Other Business**

1. There was discussion of the National Plant Collections held by Brian Fearn and it was agreed that Mr Hildyard would speak to Les Percy to approach Mr Fearn to see if he would welcome assistance.

**ACTION: BH BY: 10 August 2018**

2. There was discussion about an application for a research grant that had apparently not been received by the secretary of the Conservation Committee. He has recently had technological problems and is also coping with family issues.

**ACTION: DK to speak to Mr Arnold regarding this. BY: 10 August 2018**

3. Mr Hildyard reported that some active related societies would like to run Facebook pages but have not got the technological skills to do so. eg Tephrocactus Study Group, Mammillaria and Haworthia Societies. The view was that this would not fragment our own Facebook offering and would in fact enhance it. The Societies involved were happy to provide assistance with the additional workload if needed. The Board agreed this proposal. **ACTION: BH BY: 10 August 2018**

**August 2018**

4. Mrs Mace asked all present to provide her with suggestions for speakers at next year's AGM by email or at the next meeting. **ACTION: ALL BY: 10 August 2018**
5. Mrs Mace reported that she has approached a number of people for images to include in the 2019 calendar, with emphasis on habitat shots and a good selection of both cacti and other succulents.
6. Mr Evans said that Tom Hart-Dyke has invited us to put on a show or display at the World Garden at Lullingstone some time next year. It would probably need involvement from branches in a wide area in the south. This suggestion was well-received by the Board and Mr Hildyard said he has a marquee which could possibly be used if the dates fit. Further work



was needed to explore the options for this event

**ACTION: GE & HT BY: 10 August 2018**

7. Dr Taylor asked about the production of BEF pots, now that Philip Barker has sadly passed away. The Board's understanding is that Mr Barker made provision involving Manchester branch for this and that the pots are still being produced by a local producer, Andrews Plastics. The Board is willing to step in and assist should Manchester Branch require this.

There being no other business, the meeting concluded at 5.30pm.

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**NEXT MEETING: 11<sup>th</sup> August 2018** at the Holiday Inn, London Road, Newport Pagnell, MK16 0JA (just off junction 14 of M1). It would start at 11a.m. and a buffet lunch would be served at 1 to 1.30p.m.