

BRITISH CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting, held on Saturday 11th August 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
	Eddy Harris (EH)	Secretary
	Mr Barry Tibbetts (BT)	Shows Committee Representative
	Dr Tony Mace (TMa)	Publications Officer
	Mr Bill Hildyard (BH)	Forum & Website Administrator
	Mr John Arnold	Legal Advisor
	Mrs Suzanne Mace (SM)	Committee
	Dr Hazel Taylor (HT)	Committee
	Mr Graham Evans (GE)	Committee (Coopted)
<u>Non Trustee Officers present:</u>	Mr Tony Morris (TM)	Membership Secretary

Prior to the meeting Mr Harris had distributed a more compact version of the agreed minutes distributed by Dr Taylor to all committee members and branches, which he'd compiled from those minutes, as he felt that they were too long and members would not read them properly.

AGREED

18/31 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Mrs Alice Vanden Bon (AVB) Technical Editor & Trustee, Mr Al Laius (AL) (Journal Editor) and Dr Alan Bromley (AB) (Marketing Officer) who had also resigned his position on the Board just prior to this meeting.

18/32 MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 26TH MAY 2018

Mr Arnold made two late points to the agreed minutes: that he was not responsible for the Research Committee information, this was Alan Hill and that the information about Brian Fearn's collection should have been passed to both the Research and Conservation committees as well. As there were no further corrections since our last meeting, the agreed copies of both sets of the minutes were formally signed by Mr Thwaites with these points modified.

18/33 ACTION UPDATES

- a) Eddy Harris – Only a few Trustees had let Mr Harris know these and he said that no suggestions had been received by him from branches of suitable projects to be considered in response to Dr Taylor's March journal article, although Mr Harris did suggest Society funding for the Hyde Hall events. Mr Thwaites said that members with actions against their name should let Mr Harris know current progress in advance of future meetings. Action: **ALL** by the next meeting. It was also agreed that the combined Research/Conservation fund value would appear on the agenda. Action: **EH** all future agendas.
- b) Ian Thwaites – He said that he had provided an article for the September journal and was currently working on the remaining items identified against him except the naming of Zones which Sheila Cude had already started doing so on the new website, but this would be reviewed at a later date. Mr Morris said that Zone 6 didn't work due to the geography of the branches and it was felt that Branches/Zones should be arranged more geographically, so that events could be more effectively publicised. A suggested structure would be compiled and presented to the next Zone Reps. Meeting for review. Action: **BT** by October 2018. It was also remarked that Kingston Branch was not allocated to a Zone, although it had been part of Zone 8 in the past. He said that there were concerns and problems for Mr Morris about setting up the Direct Debit system and revising the Membership form due to the Website not being up and running and he did say that on reviewing our current systems, he hadn't realised how immature these were and needed serious updating. He felt that the Direct Debit system would not happen for 2019 renewals or until our systems were operating correctly and effectively. Mr Kirkbright gave a short summary of the costs and procedures involved in the Direct Debit system. Mr Thwaites had spoken to Brian Fearn who had said that somebody from the Nottingham Branch was helping him, but he would welcome other help.
- c) Tony Morris – He said that Peter Lewis was happy with our decision on the seed problem and he had spoken to David Rushforth. Mrs Mace said that the Society 2019 seed list would contain more *Mesemb.* seed due to the M.S.G. not having a seed distributor.
- d) Dr Hazel Taylor – She was yet to update her paper on reserves and to initiate a piece for *CactusWorld* explaining what projects the B.C.S.S. were 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 B.C.S.S. and its members because the deadline for branches' proposals had only just passed and Mr Thwaites also had further ideas to incorporate on using our accumulated funds. As the Mail Chimp server was in the U.S.A., we needed to tell our members this and draw their attention to the Mail Chimp Privacy Policy. She had accepted an action to update the B.C.S.S. Privacy Policy accordingly and to suggest wording for a sentence in the email newsletter about it. Action: **HT** by 31st October. She had attended another Charity conference about which she would provide a written report for our next meeting and she tendered her apologies as she would be unable to attend this meeting.
- d) Al Laius – In a written reply he said that the regular news from the BoT would appear in the December journal as had

previously been agreed. He said that he had not agreed anything regarding the slide & digital presentation library to be available online, but had agreed to having back journal content online after having checked with the JSTOR contract, which he said there was no problem there.

- e) Dr Tony Mace – The shop site on the new Website was now completed, but we needed to adjust the PayPal procedure amongst other minor things. Mr Hildyard said that as we hadn't asked for this, so it would cost about £200 to do these.
- f) Bill Hildyard – Most of the items listed were being addressed, although there was some work needed like on establishing whether the new Website was compliant with PECR. He had also spoken to Ralph Martin who was quite happy with what we were doing about integrating his database providing he was able to update it.
- g) Dr Gibbs – He said that most of the items shown against his name he was dealing with (*see minute 18/36/1*).
- h) John Arnold – He again remarked that he was only responsible for Conservation issues but would provide the Conservation information required.

18/34

CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE

- a) Mr Thwaites said that he had been talking to quite a number of officers of this Society and had quite a lot of conversations with various people at Kew, including the director of wild programmes and the head of their school and the head of research. Their students were required to do an overseas trip and some were involved in research and he had suggested that there might be funds available if they were working on C&S, but these would not necessarily need a journal article on conclusion, although this might be an option. If necessary, help could be given with this. He was due to give them a report shortly on what funds would be available, once he knew what they were. He felt that a relationship with Kew was to our advantage and they might give us one day conventions, probably free and delegates could have a look behind the scenes as part of this. He was keen to develop this relationship. Mr Arnold said that the Conservation Committee, since its formation, had tried unsuccessfully to form a relationship with them and Kew seemed not to be interested in making contact and sharing information with other organisations who were engaged in conservation, but this was good news and had his full support. Mr Kirkbright asked that would offering money to such an organisation be as beneficial as doing the same for people supporting conservation, but it was said that we should try both options. It was likely and Kew agreed, that whilst on these trips, video blogs could be used on Social Media on our Website.
- b) He'd had a long conversation with the R.H.S. Director General about the accounting issue and she had offered to tell us what they currently did to stay within the law. He had another meeting with the R.H.S. next week and had confirmed to them that Mr Harris and he were the Society contacts.
- c) He'd had 23 complaints, all to do with members joining the Society, but not finding out how to grow specific plants. He had spoken to Graham Charles, who had suggested that we write an insert for the March journal onwards, providing such specific information, which could be removed to form a booklet. There was considerable discussion on how this would be done, but it was agreed.
- d) He asked that 'Social Media' appeared on all future agendas. Action: **EH** all future agendas.
- e) Chris Pugh had been asking Graham Charles to write a small pamphlet on how to grow C&S to be sold by garden centres for £1.99, about which he enquired if the Society would be interested. It was said that perhaps the garden centres would fund them. There initially some opposition to this, but Mr Thwaites suggested that the pamphlet, which needed to be available early next year, contained a code which anybody buying and using this code would get £2 off the Society membership. Other possible sites were Ikea and Waitrose to which Mr Thwaites would talk with. Action: **ITH**

18/35

COMMUNICATIONS

- a) Mr Morris had received a very nice card from a new member extolling the welcome pack she had received on joining.
- b) Mr Harris had received an email from Dr Colin Walker asking if the Society would consider an electronic exchange of journals with *Avonia*. It was said that we did exchange actual journals every quarter, but no decision was forthcoming on this type of exchange. It was said that various people were asking about having an electronic journal, but most schemes did involve these being at a discount. Mr Thwaites had arranged for back issues of our journal to be issued in this form.
- c) Awards – Two award requests had been received, one was decided electronically and rejected and a request for an A.O.M was not decided as it was felt that the submitted request did not give sufficient information about the nominee's Society branch service and more information was required.

18/36

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

1. Vice-Chairman:

- a) Branches – Dr Gibbs said that he and Mr Morris had circulated his letter to members of South Norfolk asking for their favoured branch, thus finalising its closure. He had also received an email from a Kathleen Groves about a possible branch at Southwark, London, which had indicated a strong possibility of this happening and had suggested to her that the way forward would be to hold a couple of initial meetings and that he was willing to suggest a couple of possible speakers, although he had also suggested having initial informal meetings which could possibly be funded from Society funds. He also officially asked for the merging of Waltham Forest and Lea Valley branches, which was agreed.
- b) The Speakers' List – The revision of this should be completed by the end of the month. In a few cases he'd had to accept verbal acceptance of the permissions required. As previously stated he intended to issue an electronic document, with a few hard copies which he would personally produce for those branches which didn't have an email address.

2. Membership Secretary's Report:

Mr Morris stated that since the last meeting he had enrolled 137 new members, compared with 88 for the same period last year, 20 of which also took Bradleya,. These comprised 92 Full, 35 Senior, 3 Associate, 6 Junior and 1 Bradleya

only. Of these 7 were from overseas (2 from the U.S.A., 2 from France, and 1 each from China, Luxembourg and Spain). 5 new members had joined via the reduced price offer when purchasing the Information Pack, bringing the total to 117 to date. He had also reinstated 5 former members. He said that in the period 01/08/2016 to 01/08/2017 he had enrolled 367 new members, in the period 01/08/17 to 01/08/2018 he had enrolled 561 new members which gave a year on year increase of 52.85%.

3. **Treasurer's Report:**

- a) **Membership** – Mr Kirkbright gave an updated current membership as at August 6th 2018 compared with the same time as last year which was Full 1619 (+131), Senior 1123 (+57), Junior 33 (+5), which when added together, the journal taking membership total was 2775 (+193). Associate membership was 218 (+24) and Bradleya takers were 546 (+30). He also said that a comparison with 2017 showed a small drop since July 31st as there was a surge in 2017 that was greater than in 2018. He still believed that we would need to revise our print run for the September journal up by 100 as our original estimate for mailing was 2650 and we were already 125 over that figure.
- b) **Research Grant for Ignacio Soto** – He had finally received details of where to pay his grant and sent this last week, seemingly O.K. However, a few days later the online bank showed that it had been returned, so until he got a letter from the bank, he had no explanation. He had informed Ignacio. He had finally been invoiced by Leicester Botanic Gardens for the information project and had paid the bill.
- c) **2018 Convention** – Total numbers had been disappointing and initial estimates showed that it had lost some £2,300 due to the poor attendance.
- d) **Trustee Liability Insurance** – This had been purchased.
- e) **Direct Debits** – He had signed up with a company, but the initial workload seemed somewhat high. The registration had cost £330 and there would be further payments once we start setting up members. The DD Form was a complete A4 sheet, but this could probably be reduced. He had discussed a probable time scale with Mr Thwaites as this would require adding 5 new fields to the database, most of which Mr Morris would initially need to complete for each member who signed up.

4. **Shows Committee Report:**

- a) **Roles** – Mr Tibbetts reported that Alan Brown and George Thomson were welcomed as new members. Barry Tibbetts would be Chairman, Rick Gillman - Vice-Chairman and holder of National Trophies, Bill Darbon - Secretary, Show Stationery Co-ordinator and Judges Course Accommodation Officer, Ray Stephenson - Treasurer and responsible for the B.C.S.S. Handbook of Shows, Stirling Baker - National Shows Manager and Other Societies Liaison Officer, Dr Hazel Taylor - Website Co-ordinator, Alan Brown - Reports for *CactusWorld*, George Thomson - Promotional Materials and Ian Thwaites - no specific role due to his duties as B.C.S.S. Chairman.
- b) **Shows Committee Terms of Reference** – These were discussed and a new draft agreed which was being re-written by Mr Darbon.
- c) **National Convention** – A display was being organised by Messrs Darbon, Gillman, Brown, Thwaites and Dr Taylor plus a mini-Judges Course Identification Test.
- d) **Judges Course 2018** – The list of attendees had closed with a total of 37 people, 25 of whom would pay the full rate of £150 and the other 12 (committee and speakers) at the reduced rate of £90. This would result in a cost to the Society, as the numbers were below the average 45 attendance figures of recent years, despite a price increase.
- e) **National Show 2020** – Following a failure to agree a date with the East of England Arena at Peterborough, it was agreed to try Arena MK in Milton Keynes. Messrs Tibbetts and Kirkbright had visited the site on 3rd August. The venue had all the facilities needed, but the only dates available were 3rd/4th July 2020. This would be discussed at this meeting (*see minute 18/45*).
- f) **Shows & Exhibitions/Displays** – Messrs Baker and Harris along with other members of Zone 15 branches had arranged to have a display and sales over the 5 days at the R.H.S. Hyde Hall Summer Flower Show which Mr Tibbetts visited on 1st August.. The R.H.S. had provided a large marquee and the sales and display seemed to attract many of the general public present. He said it was intended to organise similar events at other R.H.S. gardens in the future. Gareth Darbon and others were trying to arrange a new large show in the East Midlands in 2019 and were currently searching for a suitable venue in the Nottingham/Derby area.
- g) **Shows Committee Awards** – Messrs Harris and Weobley were presented with awards at local events and Mr Thwaites had presented Bryan Goodey with an award at Tatton Park in the presence of some of his fellow exhibitors.

5. **Conservation Report:**

Mr Hill said that their December report had contained a request for financial support for a study of *Escobaria cubensis* that had been rejected. However, the committee had found some merit in the proposal and email contact continued. More information on the proposer and the species had resulted in the Committee re-considering and being willing to make an offer of support, but finance had been found elsewhere. Email contact had been continued and discussion was taking place on other possible projects in Cuba. Mr Arnold said that The Bill Maddams' Scholarship had now been renamed The Bill Maddams' International Scholarship and the terms for it would be re-written to reflect its scope and attract more interest. He said that they would aim to provide up to 3/year. He also said that a *Lithops* project from Dr R. Earlé had now been received and Mr Arnold gave details. As the project cost (£3,900) exceeded the normal limit it was agreed by this committee that the project was viable and the required monies would be paid imminently. Mr Thwaites asked that details of this project be given to Mr Hildyard for publication on the Website. Action: **JA** soon.

6. **Research Report:**

Mr Hill said that an offer had been made to support research by Ignacio Soto in the National Reserve of Valle Fertile, Argentina. Due to other work he had asked that the payment be delayed and did not send his bank details so the grant was not sent. He had now sent his bank details and the grant of £1,000 was to be sent by the National Treasurer (*see also minute 18/17/3(b)*).

7. **Journal Editor:**

Mr Laius' written report said that after the September journal, which would contain 10 articles, the situation was currently thus: 10 articles were ready, 6 were with the production team awaiting design and layout and 7 were currently work in progress, although 2 of these were actually done and just waiting for minor adjustments before submitting them to the production team. Therefore, there were enough articles for the next two issues (December 2018/March 2019). The September issue was currently on schedule and he would like to thank David Quail for his time and effort in taking charge of its technical compilation. He was hoping to include some articles which could capitalise on the current trend of using C&S as houseplants and in home decor. His aim was to try to make the December issue as interesting as possible with a wide variety of shorter articles which would appeal to a cross section of members, as he realised that some members might base their decision on whether to renew or not on whether they had just enjoyed that particular issue.

8. **Technical Editor:**

Mr Quail's written report stated that arrangements were in progress and on time for the assembly and compilation of the September journal which would have one insert; an advert/order form for the BCSS 2019 Calendar. The journal would have 68 inside pages, 4 more than standard size and the Newsletter would have 12 pages rather than 8.

9. **Advertising Officer's Report:**

- a) Advertising – Mr Quail's written report said that the third quarter's advertising income was £321 (£135 last year).
- b) Minimisation of Plastic Usage – He said that Warners were our printers for September and had agreed our revised plan to retain the mailing carrier sheet for the September journal, with the addition of a statement that the plastic wrapper was recyclable. This would be a trial and the results would be evaluated before plans for December were finalised. He was having great difficulty obtaining information from our December mailing house (Cavalier, for Swallowtail Printers) about the facilities they might be able to offer. They had said that their clear plastic was not recyclable, but had not come up with a costed alternative. However, they did suggest paper envelopes as a possibility and he was trying to press them to provide accurate information about cost and feasibility.

10. **Bradleya Editor's Report:**

Mr Charles reported that Bradleya no. 36 was published on July 6th, earlier than usual and in time for the B.C.S.S. Convention and E.L.K. At 240 pages it was just 16 pages less than last year's record edition and contained a good balance of articles. It was printed by Lavenham Press, resulting in a quality publication. They also saved time by doing the initial distribution to subscribers for the first time. Bradleya 37 was already started with 3 papers in process and he hoped that sufficient material would be received for a middle of the year publication.

11. **Internet Server Report:**

Dr Mace said that he had had a very serious situation with the server which ran the B.C.S.S. Website and Forum and all the Branch and Zone websites. This first came to his attention a few weeks ago when he noticed that the automatic upgrades of the Centos operating system, the cpanel and WHM software were failing and the versions we were running were now seriously behind the most recent releases. He'd raised a fault ticket with the Fasthosts system managers, but the first things they'd suggested did not work. Distracted by other work and problems, our ticket fell out of the system. He'd re-raised the ticket a week or so later. The new support person identified the source of the problem, i.e. a key port on the server had been blocked due to a report of some outputs of the B.C.S.S. server which were against the policy of the server company. It appeared that some spam or similar material was being injected through the phpbb forum software. On checking he had found that the phpbb software we were using was an out of date version and might be vulnerable to certain types of hacking. There were problems in upgrading this software due to historic issues with the development of the software and interaction with other software modules, including the Joomla (of the main site) and the photograph gallery software. Mr Hildyard had been investigating and concluded it might not be the phpbb software causing the problem and might be one of the other out of date components. Joomla in particular was very vulnerable to this sort of exploit. He said that whatever way we looked at this it was a right mess and we badly needed to find a way of getting the software updated. As it stood we were in breach of contract with the server company and they would be within their rights to pull the plug on the whole thing. The other worrying factor was that the current blocks on the server might make it difficult to upload the new Website to our server. He ended by stating that he'd had no offers of assistance from members about management of the server. This had now been going on far too long. He needed to transfer the job to somebody else soon as he did not have the capacity to do it alongside all his other jobs for the B.C.S.S.

12. **Publications report:**

Dr Mace said that the 2019 calendar and 2018 Bradleya had both been received early this year. Sales in the last few months had been relatively slow, but we had been fairly busy sending out information packs and membership forms. He said that he had been extremely busy loading up the new Website shop with journal, Bradleyas etc., which, as they did not convert directly from the old Website, had involved a lot of work. He was down to uploading the data for the most recent couple of journals which should be completed early next week.

13. **Society Convention:**
Mr Arnold gave a final report on this in which he said that although the attendance had been lower than previous years, it had gone very well. He was very grateful for the help that certain members had provided with the registration, those members who provided the contents of the 'goody bags' and those who transported the speakers and hosted them. Apart from a slight 'hitch' on the Friday, speakers were all on time and the programmes were kept to time thanks to the session leaders. Most of the speakers spoke perfect English and all talks were enjoyed by the audience. The help from the university staff was also excellent, there were no problems with plant sales of which we had 2 more than originally advertised and at the end of the event he had thanked everybody for their attendance and support. He finished by stating that having now completed 8 years organising these conventions it was time for somebody else to take them on.
14. **Digital Programme Library:**
- a) Current Progress – Mr Lambie reported that regrettably recent progress had been slow due to his health problems, but should now improve. The 2012 National Show presentation and the improved C&S Presentation had been delayed through I.T. issues, but this was being worked around.
 - b) New Programmes – Dr Gibbs was scanning slides from a new bequest and Mr Lambie would produce a programme from the results. After that Dr Gibbs would scan slides from the substantial bequest from Tom Lavender. These comprised of nice pictures, although few had any useful annotation, so their usefulness would have to be determined. He would then scan the bequest from Bill Christie and Bill Christie's existing digital programmes would be assessed to determine if they could be released in the shorter term. Mrs Mace would bring to our December meeting the substantial bequest of slides she currently was holding. These were from Daphne and Albert Pritchard, most of which were annotated as they were all habitat shots, but there were duplicates among them. Mr Lambie was in contact with a keen digital photographer from Bristol who was creating a new presentation to go directly into the library. Other programmes to be undertaken were the 2016 National Show DVD, the Sonia Barker-Fricker and John Hughes material.
 - c) Errata – 7 errata needed had been noticed and would be fixed as soon as practical. These were in programmes 24 (2), 25 (3) and 55 (2).
 - d) Image Gallery – There was some good material which was unsuitable for talks and it was proposed that if there was enough, this would be suitable for the Image Gallery. Volunteers for this work needed to be found and he would liaise with Mr Hildyard and Mrs Vanden Bon.
 - e) Remaining Slide Sets – There was very little current demand from Branches for these and it had been decided to discontinue this available aspect of the Library.
 - f) Library Services/Speakers List – He ended by reporting that the new Digital Programme list was available in draft form with the inclusion of the improvements/updates noted above.
15. **Marketing Officer's Report:** – Dr Bromley had resigned from his position on this committee but forwarded a series of handover notes which comprised:-
- a) Monthly e-Newsletter – The July e-newsletter went out on 24 July, so another one was not due until the third week of August – or perhaps skip a month and restart in September. The Mail Chimp account was set up in the B.C.S.S.'s name but whoever took it over **must** change the primary email address. This was currently one of his personal email addresses because his official marketing@bcss address had never worked reliably. Any change required verification of the new email address and one could only do that if the new email address actually worked. He would send the login details in a separate email to Messrs Thwaites and Hildyard, so perhaps the latter could change it, at least temporarily. There were currently 18,384 credits left on the block he had bought in May, which was enough for eight more emails to the 2,200 addresses.
 - b) Social media – He had been using Later.com to schedule twice-daily posts on Twitter, Instagram, Facebook and Pinterest and posts were set up until Friday 10 August at noon. He had been given many photographs by a few kind members, virtually all of which (except for those of Mr Evans) he had already posted. If it was thought that any could be re-posted he would provide them on a CD or USB stick; otherwise, he would delete them. He had posted some of Mr Evans' ones, but had been keeping them in reserve (they are all cacti, many being rarer species) and suggested that he provided his photographs directly himself if he wished to do so. Mr Hildyard should have the login details for the two social media platforms he'd set up but he would send them again in a separate email. Nothing had happened with YouTube but he did think that this was something worth pursuing. If Lyn Kimberley could gain 30,000 followers based on a polytunnel and a very modest collection, who knew what the B.C.S.S. could achieve!
 - c) Branch leaflets – The most recent leaflet (the 12th he had done this year) was for Southampton, the printing of which had been reimbursed. He didn't see any more being required until next year, assuming the free offer was continued. If anyone wanted the PowerPoint template, he would gladly provide the latest version he had been using.
 - d) Seed-raising kits for children – He had distributed to branches 995 out of the 1,000 kits that were funded centrally and had been reimbursed for all costs. There was talk of using some at the September R.H.S. Wisley event, but as he had not heard any more about this, so he'd sent 25 to Trevor Jackman anyway. As he had run out of seeds he had sent all the remaining components to Peter Cowdell with his last batch of 50 kits.
 - e) Botanical Gardens Directory – He had updated the directory with a new entry for Belfast Botanical Gardens, following his visit there in June, and Mr Hildyard had posted the second edition on the website. He could provide all the assets for this (PowerPoint file, photographs, etc) if someone could be found to take it over, if there was any interest in doing so. He did see this as an important way of gaining publicity for the society in some very appropriate locations and had already set up initial links with two Scottish gardens with the idea of putting up B.C.S.S. display boards. He hoped these would one day be progressed, along with others at many other botanical gardens.
 - f) Shows display – This had not got beyond the ideas stage. The challenge was finding a way of passing any display between branches, as well as deciding what goes on the panels, of course.

- g) Website – He had partially completed his assigned task of adding society events, albeit only from August 1 since the website would only be launched in September. He had made suggestions to Mr Hildyard for a few changes to the Events format and after they were done he would gladly input the rest of the events for September/October. He also had a go at amending the benefits page, but Mr Hildyard needed to make a few formatting changes, which he could not figure out how to do.
- h) Children’s Education – Juliet had completed the Module for Year 5 pupils and he had drafted some copy to go on the website. However, Mr Evans thought it might be too complicated for Year 5 and he was hoping to have it reviewed by a local primary school teacher, but everyone was on holiday, of course. Juliet had clearly put a lot of effort into it so he would like to see something come of it and he would do what he could to get it posted on the new website. The intention was to provide a larger seed-raising kit for classroom use, but one would need to find someone willing to do this.
- i) R.H.S. contacts – He would let Vanessa Penn know that he was no longer involved with the BoT and that all future contact regarding the Plant Society group should be via Mr Thwaites. The September event at Wisley was in the hands of the Shows Committee. He was sure that there would be other opportunities at Wisley if someone wished to follow them up.
- j) Draft marketing plan – He hoped that this would be of some use to his successor. Perhaps the BoT members would like to pass on their comments to him or her.
- k) Mr Evans said that although Dr Bromley had resigned he was still working on ideas for the local Society including trying to establish another branch in the local area.

18/37 **SOCIETY WEBSITE UPDATE**

Mr Hildyard said he thought that the new Website would not go live until February next year partly due to problems with getting the database working correctly. Mr Thwaites was concerned about this and said that we needed to have a system which reduced Mr Morris' workload: it took 3 hours to process 10 new members. He would like to engage a Project Manager from Pedalo to resolve this and to make it an automatic system. Mr Hildyard felt that in his experience a fully automatic system was possible, despite possible problems, but it was said that the responsible people should update their part of the new Website and let Mr Hildyard know of these updates. Mr Hildyard was tasked with producing a list of these people. Action: **BH** by December 1st. Mr Thwaites said that Graham Charles had asked to be the Technical Editor of the site so that it would be populated with technical material associated with C&S. This was agreed, but Mr Thwaites would speak to Al Laius. Action: **ITH** by next meeting.

18/38 **MANAGEMENT OF RESERVES**

The Board noted a confidential report received from the prospective Trustees of the Trust that nothing further had happened regarding the library project. It was felt that we needed to know a projected cost, but that there should be a limit to how long and how this was supported, but it was agreed to continue to monitor this project at each future Board meeting. Action: **EH** to add to future agendas.

18/39 **BRANCH SUGGESTIONS FOR SUITABLE PROJECTS (REF: CACTUSWORLD ARTICLE)**

As had already been stated no branch suggestions had been received. Dr Taylor said that our Patron, Tom Hart-Dyke, had invited the Society to put on a show/display as part of his planned Mexican weekend next year at Lullingstone Castle, which would be an opportunity to publicise the Society. On the Saturday a number of planned ½ hour talks would be given and a C&S show would be held. This space would then be used for a display of show plants on the Sunday plus displays by a number of specialist Societies. It was also planned to have a number of nurseries attending over the weekend. There would also be competitions about C&S with instant prizes plus an advice area. She said that the estimated cost would be about £2,500 and that normal attendance cost at the event would be £10, but B.C.S.S. members would get in for £5. Attendance was estimated at 250 to 300 people over the weekend. Mr Thwaites said that if it could be held following the E.L.K. weekend then we might be able to encourage some of the continental nurseries to attend which would boost attendance. (*Post meeting update: It had been learnt that the confirmed date was 21st/22nd September 2019 and that organisers of the event would have free entry.*) Mr Harris said that at the Hyde Hall Flower Show, attendance was some 7,000 for each of the 5 days of which some 50% had passed through their tent. It was agreed (10/1) that we would try the Lullingstone Castle event, the budget of £2,500 was agreed and Dr Taylor and Mr Evans were actioned to proceed accordingly. Action: **HT/GE** by the date of the next meeting. Mr Harris asked that the Society fund the Hyde Hall event and this was agreed, but it was said that at such events we should encourage more strongly, members of the public to join the Society. Mr Harris would talk to Dick Rolfe, the Chelmsford secretary. Action: **EH** next week.

18/40 **POSSIBLE CHANGE OF B.C.S.S. NAME AND LOGO/BADGE**

There was considerable discussion on this in which it was said that a badge and a logo were two separate items for consideration. It was also said that *CactusWorld*, our journal name, was a possible logo name. It was said that we currently had some 43 of the current design of badges left and that due to a rise in manufacturing cost, any new ones should now be sold at £5, or £2.50 if we accepted a loss, plus if we used the current design there would be no change of design costs. It was a choice of this or not buying any more. Mr Thwaites would ask his graphic designer for 3 further designs of logo to be considered at our next meeting. Action: **ITH** by next meeting.

18/41 **G.D.P.R. COMPLIANCE**

Dr Taylor said that this had been dealt with in the previous meeting's Action Points.

- 18/42 **REAPPOINTMENT OF ANCILLARY OFFICERS AND SUB-COMMITTEE MEMBERS**
Mr Harris had been in touch with most of these and all those that had replied were happy to continue. It was therefore agreed that the current participants would continue in their posts for another year. It was said that Mr Hill was not now the Secretary of the Conservation Committee, but had been replaced by Rob Stevenson.
- 18/43 **SUCCESSION PLANNING**
Mr Thwaites had spoken to a possible replacement about taking over from Mr Kirkbright and he had said that he might well do so. Mr Kirkbright had agreed to identify as much as possible of his major non-Treasurer involvement in other Society events to make the handover simpler. Action: DK in the next 6 months. This meant that other volunteers would need to be found to take on these jobs. Graham Evans had volunteered to take over Mr Harris' role and Mr Harris had given him a copy of his job profile to help with this. Finally, was the role of Dr Mace, who said that we needed to identify the two parts of what he did. There was the internet/server aspects of which Mr Hildyard was willing to undertake, although it was said that Pedalo could undertake these, but Dr Mace said that there were lesser roles within the B.C.S.S. for which we needed volunteers with Society knowledge. There was also the book side of what he did, needing storage space, or as had been suggested, a storage firm, to take over this aspect. The costing of this needed investigating. Mr Thwaites said that he felt it should be a gradual transition to avoid future problems.
- 18/44 **TRUSTEE ROLES , RESPONSIBILITIES AND BUDGETS**
Mr Thwaites said that currently there was confusion over who did what on organised events. He said that we needed to look at who was responsible for the P.R. aspect and our display boards as he felt that we needed to display a common theme for all. We needed somebody to take over the marketing of the Society that was produced and that what he wanted for future displays was a standardised message countrywide. He felt that to achieve this, such material should come from the Shows Committee. He felt that they should be liaising with the R.H.S., etc, to ask that they allowed us to have an educational display in their grounds and then provide them with suitable display material for these that would positively identify the Society. In order to achieve that he felt that the Shows Committee should have a working budget, but it was also said that how could one judge how successful this expenditure was. It was finally agreed that the Shows Committee would decide on what sort of display was required and the necessary written presentation for the event and then let this meeting know the cost. Mr Tibbetts said that there were different types of shows staged by the R.H.S. and information stands at their various gardens, all of which would need a different approach. It was also said that until we had a replacement Marketing Manager, this approach should be delayed until then. Action: **BT** hopefully by next year. Mr Thwaites had asked Sheila Cude to continue the Newsletter on a short term basis which she had agreed to do and he was to write the September editorial explaining that we needed a new Marketing Manager, now that Dr Bromley had resigned. He asked various members to provide a plant article and Mr Hildyard said that he would run the Twitter and Instagram providing he was given adequate pictures. Mr Thwaites would sort this out later, but it was said that we should set up a Social Media team to continue the liaison work that Dr Bromley had started. Action: **ITH**.
- 18/45 **CURRENT PROGRESS ON THE 2020 NATIONAL SHOW** (*see also minute 18/36/4(e)*)
Following the lack of success with the Peterborough site, Messrs Kirkbright and Tibbetts had approached the Milton Keynes MK exhibition site which was more than adequate in facilities, including catering and a bar. The available dates were earlier than normal, but if agreed a booking would be made. However, parking might be a problem if there was an event at the nearby stadium, but was thought to be unlikely. Access for nurseries, show entrants, and the public were excellent and they would pre-cover all tables, which would save considerable time. Cost would be Friday: £3,000 and the Saturday £5,000 plus the cost of tables of which Mr Tibbetts had ordered an increased number. There was also local accommodation, if booked early enough and many restaurants very local to the venue. The booking of the site was agreed for the arranged dates.
- 18/46 **SPEAKERS FOR THE 2019 A.G.M. AND VENUE**
It had been asked by our President that we change the venue to that where the Convention was held, but it was said that the normal venue had already been accepted. Graham Charles was willing to use his more powerful projector for the talks and suggested speakers for the two lectures were Dr Boris Schlumpberger, Curator of the Herrenhausen Gardens, Germany and Weibe Bosma (Stapeliads) of the Netherlands. Mrs Mace would book them if possible. Action: **SM** by next meeting.
- 18/47 **ACCOUNTING ISSUE UPDATE**
Dr Taylor and Mr Thwaites had approached three accounting firms, one of which had not responded, one had declined to provide a quote to advise on the accounting issue, but the third had listened carefully to what was said and was willing to help us. This would cost a total of £5,700 plus VAT to do so, comprising £3,000 for the accounting work and £2,700 for the taxation advice and where Gift Aid was taken, which Mr Kirkbright queried, as he said that that the Gift Aid question had already been sorted out with H.M.R.C. Mr Thwaites said that where Gift Aid was taken, no more than 25% of this could be given back, i.e. a maximum of £10,000 if all members signed up to this and Mr Kirkbright said that he had it in writing that provision of the journal was not part of the Gift Aid scheme. Mr Harris said that he had had conversations with a member who had just retired as a Tax Inspector, who had said that we didn't need this amount of detail. Mr Thwaites felt that this might be true, but as we had an issue which had been previously minuted as a potential issue, this needed resolving, so the above course might be the best solution This was agreed with 2 abstentions. Dr Taylor and Mr Thwaites were actioned to proceed with the engagement of the accounting firm based on the quote that they had provided. Action: **HT/ITH** as soon as practicable. It was courteous (but not essential) to advise our current auditors when another firm of accountants had been engaged to advise the B.C.S.S. and it was agreed

that Mr Kirkbright would send them a courtesy letter. Dr Taylor would draft a courtesy letter to pass to Messrs Kirkbright and Thwaites and if they agreed with this, Mr Kirkbright would sign it and send it to our current accountants. Action: **HT** within the next week. Mr Kirkbright also agreed to provide the independent accounting firm with any details of our accounting that they might request provided it was not too onerous and would attend the meetings if they fell within his work pattern.

18/48 **DATES FOR NEXT YEAR'S MEETINGS**

These were agreed as 2nd February, 11th May, 10th August and 7th December 2019. Mr Harris would inform the hotel of these. Action: **EH** by next meeting.

18/49 **FUTURE PUBLICATIONS**

Mr Evans said that Roger Ferryman's *Eriosyce* book was currently slowly being compiled with Graham Charles' help, but he was looking to use another publisher. Other possibilities were suggested included Tom McCoy's 'Aloes of Arabia' and it was suggested that we contact him to ask if he was looking for a publisher or perhaps contact Kew to see if there was a book which could be jointly published. Mr Thwaites would speak to Mr Laius. Action: **ITH** by next meeting. On the subject of books the late Philip Downs had bought the 4 volume set of Britton and Rose's '*Cactaceae*' and the 4 volume White, Dyer and Sloane's '*Stapelia*' books when the North and South N.C.S.S. libraries were combined and it was later discovered that these should not have been on the list of books to be sold. Ansie, his wife, had discovered this after his death and arranged for them to be passed back. These were now with Brendan Burke, but we didn't know their value or how much he had paid for them, so that we could reimburse her for them. (*Post Meeting Update: We had learnt that Ansie had donated the books back to the Society.*)

18/50 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

1. Posters – It was agreed that the stocks of very old A3 and A4 Society blank posters be scrapped although Mr Harris asked for a small stock of both sizes to be reserved and given to him as he used them frequently.
2. Show Awards – It was agreed not to change the names of our major Show Awards.

There being no other business, the meeting concluded at 5.00pm.

NEXT MEETING: 1st December 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..