



REPORT AND RESULTS OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2023 OF THE NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY NETWORK TRUST

Company number 03963387 – Registered Charity Number 1082163

MINUTES

DATE: 23 NOVEMBER 2023

LOCATION: NATIONAL MUSEUMS
SCOTLAND, EDINBURGH

TIME: 16:35 – 16:50

Chair: Neil Hodges

Minutes: Sarah Hyslop

Company Secretary & CEO: Lisa Chilton

Trustees Present: Mandy Rudd, Wilma Harper, Pete Tomlin, Roddy Fairley, Belinda Howell, David Slawson

Neil Hodges; Open remarks / Welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone attending the AGM. Eligible voting members in the room showed hands. We received 35 votes in advance of the meeting and have met the required quorum of 20.

Trustee apologies for absence

Terence Jagger, Matt Postles, Alice Kershaw, Dom Aslan, Gail Hutton, Louise Li, Rob Cooke and Eleni Polychroniadou were not able to attend the meeting.

Minutes of the previous meeting

These were made available for viewing on the NBN Trust website [here](#). No notifications of amendments were received and, as such, the minutes from last year's meeting were approved as a true record.

Neil Hodges, Chair's Report

The Chair provided an overview on the Trust's activities and governance during the year.

There has been good progress with the Trust's strategic goals with a continued positive momentum. The following three items are of note from the year which are representative of the Trusts' activities and go towards meeting our strategic objectives:

The NBN Atlas

There has been a continued focus on enhancements to improve the functionality and performance of the Atlas, six years on from its launch. Good progress has been made on

this critical project which it is expected to be concluded in 2024. It is of fundamental importance that we continue to go from strength to strength with the NBN Atlas as the unique repository for UK biodiversity data; a go-to place for biodiversity data.

Better Biodiversity Data Project

The two-year Better Biodiversity Project in Scotland was launched to help support the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy with the idea of bringing together Scottish Local Environmental Record Centres. This represents a key leadership role of the type the Trust is keen to take on, resources permitting. This project can also be an exemplar of effective and efficient use of resources between data partners.

Extending participation

We were delighted to become a partner in the Department for Education funded Nature Parks project - in particular due to our role as UK lead for iNaturalistUK - led by the Natural History Museum, the Royal Horticultural Society and the Royal Society. The project aims to ensure youth in England have the opportunity to develop a meaningful connection with nature. This is a good example of several aspects of our strategy: the need for strong partnerships; taking opportunities to lead where we feel we can; and pursuing initiatives that can attract not only new recorders, but also the next generation to a love for the natural world and the need to protect it.

Under the Groundwork New to Nature programme - which has the aim of providing life changing experience by giving access to a career in the environmental sector – we hosted one of 70 placement and pleased to say, back in April 2023 we recruited Rhiannydd Stock as an Atlas Support Officer.

For more details about the NBN Trust and its activities, and, indeed, activities across the sector, I would draw your attention to our Annual Impact Report which can be found on the NBN Trust website here <https://nbn.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Annual-Impact-Report-2022-23-WEB-ARTWORK.pdf>

The Chair also gave thanks to our CEO, Lisa Chilton, and her small team for all their efforts during the year; in achieving so much – a small team pursuing big ambitions.

Governance

On governance matters, we have recently recruited six new Trustees to the board. They bring a variety of talents but we were particularly pleased to have so many quality applications from individuals who would provide particular skills in the technical and commercial areas given our need to keep evolving the NBN Atlas, keep abreast of tech developments and the need to continually focus on ways we can develop the trust in terms of financial sustainability.

The Chair welcomed, Louise Li, Rob Cooke, Dom Aslan, Alice Kershaw, Gail Hutton and Eleni Polychroniadou to our Board of Trustees.

The Chair also extended a huge personal thanks for the support and guidance given by our Patron and those Trustees who will be stepping down at the next board in February 2024 after six years, those being: Belinda Howell, Wilma Harper and Matt Postles and (after 13 years) Roddy Fairley (our Treasurer).

Given the change of Trustees, we thought it important to ensure we retain some additional continuity. Therefore, notwithstanding having served as a Trustee for six years, we have proposed that Mandy Rudd remains as a Trustee. As well as providing continuity this will mean the Trust also benefits from Mandy's sector-wide knowledge and, more specifically, her experience, as CEO of the Greenspace Information for Greater London (GIGL), of the vital work that local record centres play in the collection and collation of biodiversity data. This is resolution 2 which we will be returning to after the Treasurer's report.

The Chair shared with that he too will be stepping down after six years. He said this is significant for him as the Trust has been an important part of his life for those six years. During this time he has worked with a wonderful team, met inspiring people, and, together, they have achieved a lot. Those six years have been a progressive period in the NBN Trust story and therefore he hoped to have made a small but important contribution in the constant fight to improve the state of the natural world. The Chair's last board meeting will be next February (2024). It was noted that we are aiming to launch a search for the new Chair before the year end.

Roddy Fairley, Presentation of the Annual Financial Accounts

The Treasurer provided an overview on the Trust's activities and governance during the year.

NBN Trust Financial Statements

The NBN Trust financial statements for 2022-23 have been made available on the NBN website [NBN-Trust-Financial-Statements-2021-2022-2.pdf](#)

The financial accounts for the period 2022-2023 have been officially approved by the Board of Trustees.

Financial Overview

The Treasurer shared that the Trust is in a state of growth and we are in somewhat difficult times with continuing to secure public sector funding. As the levels of funding from government are making up a smaller part of our annual income we need to continue to diversify our funding in order to balance our budgets.

During the year, Natural England were willing to bring forward additional funding which shows their value in the Trust which is much appreciated.

Securing additional funding from new sources such as from various charitable trusts is underway and there have been some successes. We also have a healthy pipeline of potential new funding opportunities.

We did end the 22-23 financial year with a small surplus due to the funds being required in the current financial year. The Executive and Board of Trustees have taken a risk averse and cautious approach throughout the year which has helped.

Treasurer Retirement

As the Chair mentioned, it will also be Roddy's last Treasurer report and he gave thanks to the team, Trustees and Network for the valuable role they have played in making the last 13 years a very pleasurable and worthwhile experience.

Ordinary Resolutions

A. Extension of Mandy Rudd's term as a Trustee for a three-year period

That Mandy Rudd's Trustee position is extended for a further three year period.

In accordance with our governing documents, Trustees may serve two consecutive three-year terms. Any further extensions must be approved by the membership. We wish to secure approval for Mandy Rudd to serve on the Board for a third three-year period. There are two reasons for this. Firstly, Mandy's extension would provide valuable continuity and experience on the Board at a time when we are in the process of replacing several trustees who are coming to the end of their two three-year terms in March 2024, namely, Neil Hodges, Roddy Fairley, Wilma Harper, Belinda Howell, Matt Postles. Camilla Taylor also resigned earlier this year. Therefore, we believe it is appropriate to retain the benefit of Mandy's very significant experience as an NBN Trustee. Secondly, Mandy brings expertise in Local Environmental Record Centres, which are a key part of the NBN and the focus of strategic priorities for the NBN Trust in the coming three years.

B. Election of Auditors

That Rogers Spencer is appointed Auditor of the Charity to act as such until further notice and that the Trustees be authorised to fix their remuneration.

The Board of Trustees recommend the appointment of Rogers Spencer as Accountants until further notice and that the trustees shall fix their remuneration.

Voting

The voting summary was as follows:

AGM Voting Resolution A	
Members eligible to vote	268
Votes received in person	16
Votes received via online form	35
Total number of votes received	51
% of membership voting	19%
Quorate (actual number)	20
In Favour	47
Proxy (Chair to vote on their behalf)	3
Abstain	1
Against	0

The resolution was passed.

AGM Voting Resolution B	
Members eligible to vote	268
Votes received in person	16
Votes received via online form	35
Total number of votes received	51
% of membership voting	19%
Quorate (actual number)	20
In Favour	44
Proxy (Chair to vote on their behalf)	5
Abstain	2
Against	0

The resolution was passed.
