



**Arboricultural Association**  
**Minutes of the 53rd Annual General Meeting**

held on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2019 in the Alumni Auditorium, University of Exeter

**Present:**

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

Trustees                      Jenny Long  
   Michelle Ryan  
   Navin Sehmi

Staff                      Jessica Palfreyman                      (*Minutes*)  
   Hanif Bhula  
   Stephen Hodson  
   Simon Richmond  
   Paul Smith

Members                      *A list of attending members can be provided upon request to AA HQ.*

**Apologies:**                      Alastair Durkin, Simon Holmes, Bob Morwood, John Robinson, Alan Simpson, Martin Thomas, Bob Widd

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**(1) Welcome, by the Association Chairman**

The Chairman welcomed and thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

**(2) Apologies for absence**

As listed above.

**(3) Minutes of the 52<sup>nd</sup> Annual General Meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2018**

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

**(4) Receipt of the Reports of the Board of Directors, September 2018 - September 2019**

It was proposed by the Chair that the reports submitted and published could be taken as read and approved; this was agreed by the attendees. There were no questions.

The reports were proposed for approval by Keith Sacre and seconded by Paul Barton.

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

- (a) Chairman**
- (b) Financial Performance (1<sup>st</sup> January 2018 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018)**
- (c) Professional Committee**
- (d) Education and Training Committee**
- (e) Media and Communications Committee**
- (f) Arboricultural Association Trading Limited**

**(5) Receipt of the Summary Accounts of the Association for Financial Year 2018**

Laurence Vine-Chatterton, the Association's Treasurer delivered a brief overview of the Association's finances for 2018 (*see Annual Report pages 12-15*).

The Chair asked whether there were any questions that emerged from the accounts; there were none. Tony Lane proposed the accounts to be an accurate record, Henry Girling seconded that.

**(6) Presentation of the Budget and Performance for 2018 and Re-forecast Data at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2018**

The Treasurer presented a summary of the accounts and budget information, including the audit summary from the Auditors. The Association's revenue was £1.35 million for 2018 with a forecast of £1.46 million for 2019. The 2018 surplus at £44,500 was down just slightly from 2017's surplus of £46,600.

Most of the Association's reserves remain tied up in the Malthouse property and mortgage repayments are now close to their completion.

In 2018 Membership subscriptions accounted for 30% of total income, with events such as Conference (12% of total income) and ARB Show (9% of total income) continuing to rise and provide valuable income. Approved Contractor income continues to increase accounting for 19% of total income. Training & Certifications (14% of total income) had a reduction in 2018 but looks more positive in 2019. RC scheme revenue is static and Publication income remains variable.

Expected turnover for 2019 is up to £1.46 million with a net profit forecast of £46,000. This would be roughly in line with budget.

The Treasurer stated the importance of maintaining a diverse variety of income streams and stressed that the Association was in a steady and stable state where reserves were increasing, and income could be reinvested into member facing projects.

The Treasurer said that despite the strength of the Association's current position, the AA was not becoming complacent and was staying on top of things.

The treasurer then thanked the staff at headquarters for their continued efforts and a successful year.

**(7) Appointment of Auditors for 2019**

Jaime Bray suggested that the Association reappoint Hazlewoods as auditors for 2019. Andrew Poynter proposed the suggestion and Tony Lane seconded the proposal.

**(8) Report of Retirement of Trustees during the period AGM 2018 - AGM 2019**

From 9<sup>th</sup> September 2019, three trustee positions will become vacant. Mike Sankus and Ian Murat are retired from the board by rotation and Simon Holmes has resigned his position. Keith Sacre who had been co-opted to the board for 2019 will also be stood down pending re-election.

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

**(9) Questions Received in Advance of the AGM**

There were none.

**(10) Election of Association Trustees for the term AGM 2019 - AGM 2020**

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

- Robin Harper
- Ian Murat
- John Price
- William Rolph
- Keith Sacre
- Michael Sankus
- Alan Simson
- Robert Widd

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

The following nominees were elected/re-elected to the board:

Ian Murat  
Michael Sankus  
Keith Sacre  
Alan Simson

The Chair and CEO thanked all the current and departing trustees for their efforts over the last year.

**(11) Date and Venue of 54th AGM**

The next AGM will be held at the University of Exeter on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2020.

**(12) Any Other Business Relevant to the AGM**

- i) Henry Girling queried what had happened regarding the Arboricultural Association Commemorative Medal to be presented to individuals who had served the cause of Arboriculture over the course of their lives. He voiced concern that several individuals who could have been awarded such a medal had passed away over the past few years.

The CEO responded that such a medal was created and awarded posthumously to Bill Matthews who was the proposed recipient of the medal.

Mr Girling noted that it should not be a single award or medal but a perpetual medal to be awarded as deserving recipients were found. It was agreed that this would be added to the agenda for the next Board meeting.

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

Simon Richmond responded explaining that plans have been drawn up and work had commenced in late winter 2018/2019 with the planting of a native species hedgerow and preparation of an old vegetable garden for planting as a wildflower meadow with specimen trees. Work should be close to completion in Spring 2020.

- iii) Henry Girling expressed his concerns regarding a recent influx of circulars targeting vulnerable citizens purporting to be from tree surgeons. He also pointed out the trend of tree surgeons knocking on doors and scaring homeowners into having unnecessary and damaging work done to their trees. Mr Girling stated that it was important that the Association push forward the cause for licensing tree surgeons.

The CEO agreed that this was a worrying trend and that the Association was working closely with various government departments to demonstrate the importance of a professional arboricultural industry and that much of the Association's focus in 2020 would be on public outreach, empowering the public to recognise and challenge bogus tree surgeons.

Update from the C.E.O.

The CEO presented an update on the Association's activities through 2018/2019 and an overview of the priorities for 2019/2020. As summarised below.

- The Association's membership is still growing steadily whilst many member organisations are stagnating, achieving between 5-8% growth every year for the last three years.
- Branches are growing and are increasing engagement in their areas. HQ is offering much more support to assist with hosting, booking and arranging workshops, talks and seminars.
- New marketing/communication materials being produced by the AA stressing the importance of Arboriculture.

- Dramatic increases in social media audiences across all platforms following the appointment of new marketing apprentice and improved input.
- Training remains a critical income stream which is managed very closely so future courses are organised to suit potential attendees. Reduction in course cancellation in 2019.
- Two student conferences to be held in UK in 2019 – one in the north at Myerscough College the other in the South East.
- 2019 Arb Show attendance down slightly from the prior year's record in 2018, due to poor weather on the Saturday deterring members of the public from visiting.
- Conference has seen yet another record attendance in 2019 and continues to go from strength to strength.
- The Arb Magazine is now available in electronic format and is being prepared for marketing overseas.
- The Arboricultural Journal still requires work to develop its offerings and improve its readership and standing in the academic arena.
- The Approved Contractor Scheme has grown by 10% each year for two years and is picking up momentum. The RC scheme is growing with 4 new RCs in 2019, but it is still too small to be truly impactful at this stage.
- A lot of focus on political engagement to keep raising the profile of the industry.
- The results of the Skills Survey are to be presented to parliament at the end of 2019 with the objective of horticulture and arboriculture being recognised as a STEM subjects.
- With 2020 being the year of Plant Health, the Association has been asked to contribute to a garden at the Chelsea Flower Show and the Association will be supporting this.
- Appointment of new Senior Technical Officer John Parker, to help us to create new links and take advantage of new opportunities to raise the profile of Arboriculture.
- The CEO thanked the staff at HQ for their continued hard work, the trustees for their time and the branches and other volunteers for their efforts over the past year.

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Meeting Closed