

# BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

## Minutes of the AGM of the British Ornithologists' Union held online on 13 April 2022 via Zoom

The meeting opened at 18:00h with a total of 32 members in attendance, four of whom were Officers of the Union.

Prof Juliet Vickery welcomed everyone and thanked them for taking the time to join us.

### 1. Apologies for absence

None were received.

### 2. Minutes of the previous AGM

Minutes of the previous AGM held on 31 March 2021 via Zoom (published online <https://www.bou.org.uk/about-the-bou/rules-annual-reports-agm-items/>) were approved as a true record of that meeting.

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

Approval of the minutes was proposed by Dr Mark Eaton and seconded by Ms Helen Baker.

### 3. Adoption of the Annual Report of Council & Approval of Accounts for 2021

President, Prof Juliet Vickery, introduced the Annual Report and Honorary Treasurer, Mr Graham Appleton, the Annual Accounts.

Prof Vickery stated that 2021 could be summed up in three words; virtual, global and up.

The BOU had run several successful virtual conferences during the year, thanks in part to a great team of volunteers supporting Mr Dudley and Mrs Langford. The switch to virtual conferences meant a greater global reach than in person events with nearly 50% of the delegates at BOU2022 being from outside the UK.

The recent introduction of dual language abstracts for IBIS papers has also increased the inclusivity of IBIS and the BOU's Equality and Diversity Working Group continues to develop new initiatives to make the BOU more diverse.

IBIS has risen up the Impact Factor rankings and is again number 1 in Ornithology (out of 28 journals) and our presence on social media continues to go from strength to

strength and on Twitter alone we now have over 20,000 followers, the largest of any ornithological journal.

Prof Vickery mentioned two recent items that had occurred since the Annual Report was produced.

Firstly, she was delighted to share with members the appointment of Dr Leila Walker to take over as Chief Operations Officer when Mr Dudley retires later in the year after 25 years of service to the Union.

Secondly, she shared with members the very sad news of the recent passing of Gwen Bishop [nee Bonham] who worked for the Union for 16 years up to her retirement in 2003. Gwen overlapped with Steve Dudley's arrival and was central to the successful running and development of the Union during her time with us.

Prof Vickery ended by stating that few people appreciate that the BOU is pretty much run by just two people – Mr Steve Dudley [Chief Operations Officer] and Mrs Angela Langford [Journal & Office Manager] – and wanted to end by thanking them both for all that they do to support and grow the BOU to ensure it moves with these changing times. She also thanked all our brilliant Council and committee members, and members of the BOU for supporting us and, in doing so, help us to support the ornithological community.

Prof Vickery handed over to Mr Appleton, Honorary Treasurer, to present the review of the Union's finances.

Mr Appleton began by stating that, despite the constraints of Covid19, the BOU's finances were still sound. The accounts indicate a small surplus in 2021 but this was caused by an increase in the value of investments, following falls in 2020. Taking the two years together, income & expenditure are in line with plans.

Mr Appleton went on to state that there were two areas of concern for the BOU's finances – publications and membership income. IBIS income accounts for 50% of turnover and the changing face of publishing (e.g. Open Access) makes it harder to plan for the future. Some decline in membership numbers had been expected, in light of the

fact that a large proportion of new member recruitment is linked to in person conferences, and Council would need to consider how to stimulate growth.

Although not relevant to the 2021 accounts, Mr Appleton described ways in which he and the Investment Trustees are monitoring the effects of the Ukraine/Russia conflict on the BOU's investments.

The adoption of the Annual Report and approval of the Annual Accounts for 2021 was proposed by Dr Rob Robinson and seconded by Dr Theresa Robinson.

#### **4. Elections to Council**

Council proposed that Dr Mark Eaton be elected as Honorary Secretary to replace Dr Helen Baker; that Dr Mark Eddowes and Dr Catharine Horswill be elected as Ordinary Members of Council to replace Drs Emma Cunningham and Mark Eaton.

There being no other names put forward, rule 10.3 applies and the nominations are approved.

Prof Vickery thanked both Dr Emma Cunningham and Dr Helen Baker for their time on Council, in particular Dr Baker for her sterling work over many years for the BOU.

#### **5. Appointment of Auditors**

Mr Appleton stated although at the previous AGM it had been agreed that there should be a review of the auditors in 2022, in light of the change in Chief Operations Officer this year it had been agreed to delay the review until 2023 to allow the incoming COO change to familiarise themselves with existing practices.

The reappointment of Azets Audit Services as the Union's auditors was proposed by Mr Appleton and seconded by Dr Emma Cunningham.

#### **6. Any Other Business**

There being no other business, Prof Vickery declared the AGM closed at 18:17h and she again thanked all of those who keep the BOU moving and thanked members for their attendance and continued support.