



**Genetics Society**  
**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
**Thursday 23 November 2017**  
**The Royal Society, London**

**1. Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting held on Thursday 10 November 2016**

The minutes of the AGM held on Thursday 10 November 2016 were circulated to members electronically on 9 November 2017. No objections were raised and the minutes were accepted as a correct record.

**2. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising from the last AGM.

**3. President's Report**

Professor Wendy Bickmore announced that this would be her last year as President of the Genetics Society. The incoming President, Professor Laurence Hurst, Chair in Evolutionary Genetics at the University of Bath, would officially take up the role from 1 May 2018.

Professor Bickmore reported that the full Genetics Society committee had met the preceding day, and had discussed a number of topics. One proposal that had been approved was to do more to engage with the society's Local Representatives. It had been agreed to rename the role to "Local Ambassador" and the committee would be writing to all Local Representatives to inform them of this change soon. Professor Bickmore asked members to inform the Honorary Secretary, Dr Jonathan Pettitt, if they did not have a representative in their area, or if they were interested in volunteering.

As one of, if not the, oldest society dedicated to genetics and heredity, the Genetics Society would be celebrating its centenary year in 2019. The celebrations were being project managed by Dr Cristina Fonseca, who was based at the Royal Institution, and Professor Bickmore gave an overview of some of the activities that would be taking place to mark the occasion. These included a "History of Genetics in 100 Ideas", to which members would be invited to contribute, and a Discovery Exhibition at the Chelsea Flower Show on the theme of Mendel's Glasshouse. The centenary itself would be celebrated on 25 June 2019 at the John Innes Centre in Norwich, with a special lecture from past president, Professor Sir Paul Nurse.

This vibrant programme of events would be supported by a new website, to be launched in the New Year, and by income from the journals *Heredity* and *Genes & Development*.

**4. Honorary Treasurer's Report**

Professor Martin Taylor introduced himself as the society's new Honorary Treasurer, and explained that he had been in post since 1 May.

Professor Taylor reported that the following statutory returns had been completed for the society: an independent financial audit conducted by Johnston Carmichael LLP for the period 1/1/17-31/12/17 was signed off in September 2017, and the Trustee's Report and Accounts to 31 December 2016 had been submitted to the Charity Commission and the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator.

As mentioned by Professor Bickmore, the accounts were very healthy and reserves were actually too large for a charity to accumulate. Income was mainly generated by the journal

and membership subscriptions. The society's total revenue was around £2 million, which was 10% up on last year.

Most expenditure went on grant activities, publication costs and website development. Professor Taylor presented some brief grant statistics for 2017, and encouraged members to apply. Non-charitable activities included secretarial services at a cost of around £32k per annum and investment management.

Since the Charity Commission did not approve of reserves that were larger than necessary, a significant proportion would be spent on the centenary celebrations. It was anticipated that this would reduce the surplus down to the £1.2 million mark. The society was also keen to invest in legacy projects, which would leave an impression beyond 2019.

Under this item, one member of the society asked if membership subscriptions were eligible for gift aid. Professor Taylor confirmed that although they should qualify, this was not an option currently offered by the society.

## **5. Honorary Secretary's Report and Business for Transaction**

- (a) Dr Jonathan Pettitt opened his report by summarising the following programme of medals and prizes for 2018:
  - (i) Balfour Lecture: Dr Ludmil Alexandrov (University of California, San Diego)
  - (ii) Genetics Society Medal: Dr Mike Bevan (John Innes Centre, Norwich)
  - (iii) JBS Haldane Lecture: Dr Turi King (University of Leicester)
  - (iv) Mary Lyon Medal: Dr Sarah Teichmann (Wellcome Trust, Sanger Institute, Hinxton)
  - (v) Mendal Medal: Professor Mary-Claire King (University of Washington)
  - (vi) Sir Kenneth Mather Prize: Jessica King (University of Edinburgh)

## **6. Applications for new membership**

- (a) Election of new members

A list of new members elected from 1 November 2016 – 1 November 2017 had been circulated to the membership for approval on 9 November by email. The results of this ballot are provided in Appendix A. It was noted that 537 new members had joined in this time, and that the society had 1925 members at 15 November 2017. The society's aim was to achieve 2019 members by 2019.
- (b) Ratification of new committee members

It was noted that the following appointments had been formally ratified following an electronic ballot of committee members in December 2016:

  - (i) Postgraduate representative: Helena Wells (King's College London)
  - (ii) Ordinary committee member, Area 'B', Genomics: Sudhakaran Prabakaran (University of Cambridge)
  - (iii) Ordinary committee member, Area 'D', Applied and Quantitative Genetics: Daniel Thorogood (Aberystwyth University)
- (c) Election of new committee members

It was noted that the following positions would become vacant on 1 May 2018 as Professor Richard Flavell and Professor Mark Jobling were standing down:

Area E (Evolutionary, ecological and population genetics)

Area F (Corporate genetics and biotechnology)

Nominations had been received and the new post holders would be announced in the next issue of the society's newsletter. Dr Pettitt thanked both Professor Flavell and Professor Jobling for their contributions to the Society's business during their tenures.

In addition, Mrs Dominique Kleyn was stepping down as the Scientific Meetings Secretary, and would be replaced by Dr Marika Charalambous from 1 May 2018. This would therefore create a new vacancy for a Cell and Developmental Genetics Ordinary Committee member, which would be advertised on the Society's website and in the newsletter.

- (d) Creation of new committee posts  
Dr Pettitt reported that the committee had agreed to create a new Policy Officer post to help the Genetics Society extend its impact beyond academia and engage more with policy makers. Professor Rebecca Oakey had been successfully appointed to the role.

## **7. Any Other Business**

- (i) Dr Pettitt highlighted the forthcoming grant deadlines for 2017/18, and encouraged applications for the Sir Kenneth Mather Prize as none had been received so far. The extended deadline of midday on 1 December was noted.
- (ii) Dr Pettitt then closed the meeting by thanking Professor Bickmore for her dedication to the work of the society over the past three years, and for leading the centenary initiatives.

## **Appendix A**

### **Results of an electronic ballot circulated to members of the Genetics Society on 9 November 2017, regarding the approval of new members joining the Society since 1 November 2016.**

Q. If you are unable to attend the Genetics Society's AGM on Thursday 23 November, please could you confirm that you wish to admit the new members listed here to the Society.

Yes: 92.8 (39)

No: 2.3% (1)

Abstain: 4.7% (2)

**Jonathan Pettitt**

**Honorary Secretary**