

BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND

ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

For the Year Ended

31 March 2022

**Registered Charity
England and Wales No. 1152954
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BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND

ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

For the year ended 31 March 2022

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BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND

ANNUAL REPORT

For the year ended 31 March 2022

The Board of Trustees presents its Annual Report together with the Accounts of the Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland ("the Society", generally known as BSBI) for the year ended 31 March 2022. Since Charity Trustees are also Directors, this Annual Report is also a Directors' Report as required by S417 of the Companies Act 2006.

The Accounts have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out on pages 23-25 and comply with the Society's Articles, the Companies Act 2006, the Charity SORP (Financial Reporting Standard 102 (FRS 102)) and applicable law and accounting practice.

1. Objectives and activities

Objectives

The objects of the Society (as stated in its Articles of Association) are:

- to promote the study and understanding of, and interest in, the British and Irish vascular plant and charophyte flora; and
- to support, encourage, carry out and participate in research into the taxonomy, ecology, biogeography and conservation of the British and Irish flora and to co-operate with European and other botanists in matters of mutual interest and concern.

The Society had undertaken various measures, prior to April 2021, to facilitate the meeting of these objectives, and these were implemented, strengthened and augmented during the period under review. These measures included the adoption of a new Strategic Plan *BSBI's Strategic Plan 2021-2024*; the implementation of a suite of governance changes to facilitate the Plan's delivery; and the creation of a new Fundraising Manager role.

In April 2021 the Society's first ever Chief Executive Officer, Julia Hanmer, took up her post with a brief to deliver the Strategic Plan, which was developed in 2020/21 during a series of consultations, workshops and debates funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund's Resilient Heritage initiative and facilitated by the Centre for Charity Effectiveness, Bayes Business School. This work was carried out in order to clarify what BSBI's members in particular, and all those interested in botany, needed from the Society; how decision-making processes might be streamlined; how resources could be deployed even more effectively and the operating deficit reduced; and how the organisation might be restructured in order to attract further resources and appeal to wider audiences.

The Strategic Plan focuses on these three goals:

1. Building a diverse community of botanists to sustain and develop the skill base.
2. Providing high quality, impartial data and interpretation for research and to help address bio-diversity loss and climate change.
3. Disseminating information to drive a passion for plants.

Activities

The Strategic Plan is now helping BSBI move forward in a sustainable and resilient way, building on almost two centuries of achievements while being ready to grow and adapt to the challenges of a rapidly changing world, such as the ongoing impact during the period under review of the Covid-19 pandemic and its attendant restrictions on travel across Britain and Ireland and face-to-face meetings.

BSBI continued to respond to those restrictions as they evolved: clear guidance was made available and regularly updated via the Society's website and social media platforms; all field and indoor meetings were postponed, cancelled, or moved online; and a programme of online training webinars, uploaded

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to a dedicated YouTube channel, supported both experienced botanists keen to keep their identification skills sharp and beginner botanists eager to take their first steps in plant identification and recording.

Fortuitously, plant recording for the Society's third plant distribution Atlas (the Atlas 2020 project) had already completed just prior to the first lockdown, so during the period under review, County Recorders were able to focus on such local activities and projects as were permissible under the restrictions, while the Society's scientific staff were able to focus on developing maps, writing captions, analysing and interpreting the data all in preparation for the publication in Spring 2023 of the print and online versions of the Atlas. As of 31st March 2022, the BSBI Distribution Database (DDb) held 50,530,788 plant distribution records, making it one of the world's largest databases of biological records. During the period under review, 12 new County Recorders were appointed, swelling the network to 196 and working alongside the 99 expert taxonomic referees to provide the volunteer support which underpins all the Society's activities and achievements.

The Society's botanical surveys deliver specific scientific and conservation objectives including the monitoring over time of changes in the geographic ranges of British and Irish wild plants and more detailed recording of the locations and population sizes of the scarcer species including aquatic and montane species. They also support the development and implementation of conservation and land management policy and practice to address biodiversity loss and tackle climate change. The Society has continued to build on its longstanding reputation for providing a recognised evidence base which is increasingly relied on by scientific researchers and conservation practitioners. One example of this is the Society's work, in partnership with Natural England and the Woodland Trust, to develop botanical value maps and 'heatmaps', based on the plant records held in the BSBI DDb, aimed at identifying areas of high botanical value and ensuring that tree-planting is not carried out on such sites. Work started on this initiative in Spring 2021 with the aim of making the maps available to land-owners and decision-makers in the Summer of 2022.

Three country-level projects were launched to encourage the recording of rare plants in Scotland, in England and in Ireland, and work continued to develop a smartphone app for recording plants in the field, while a Working Group was set up to look at how best to maximise the value of plant records collected via iRecord. A second Working Group was set up to re-initiate lapsed projects to look at national herbaria, with a view to maximising awareness and use of this valuable resource. The Society also continued to be an active partner in the National Plant Monitoring Scheme, encouraging members to adopt a square for monitoring and County Recorders to take on mentorship roles.

BSBI usually holds field meetings throughout Britain and Ireland to further its botanical survey programme while introducing new members to the Society, fostering the mentoring of individuals' field identification skills, encouraging members to work together and helping to build a diverse community of botanists to sustain and deliver the skill base. Most of the face-to-face field meetings and training events planned as part of the 2021/22 national programme at locations across England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales had to be postponed due to the ongoing restrictions but some regional and local face-to-face field meetings were able to take place as and when restrictions were lifted, and other events were offered with a hybrid format. In Scotland, two online training events – one focused on grass identification and one on plant families – were augmented by live specimens sent to participants in advance and follow-up field meetings; in Ireland, eight webinars and 13 field training days, attracting 90 participants in total, were offered under the banners of the Irish Grasslands Project and the Aquatic Plant Project, and further training days in the field were offered for glassworts and oraches, two challenging plant groups.

A series of online conferences, workshops and webinars offered opportunities to botanists at all skill levels to stay in touch and to keep their plant identification skills sharp. Some of these events were (part-)funded by National Parks & Wildlife Services (NPWS). All webinars were uploaded to the BSBI YouTube channel which also provided links to playlists of partner videos. By the end of March 2022,

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the channel had attracted more than 2,000 subscribers and many of the webinars had been viewed thousands of times. A series of four Winter talks, offered to all by video link but with subsequent views restricted to BSBI members, attracted a total 497 attendees.

Plant group(s)	Online Training Webinars 2021/22				
	Target area	Funded/ charged	No. of webinars	Participants on the day	YouTube views
Dandelions	Britain & Ireland	Free	1	32	914
Ferns	Britain & Ireland	£7/ £5	1	Online link only	173
Ferns	Britain & Ireland	Free	1	288	292
Grasses	Ireland	Free/ funded by NPWS	3	131	3,297
Aquatic plants	Ireland	Free/ funded by NPWS	3	136	1,473
Plant families	Scotland/ Britain & Ireland	£15 including Identification booklet	1	53	3,091
Yellow Composites	Britain & Ireland	Free	1	Online link only	1,243
Potentillas	Britain & Ireland	Free	2	115	1,263
Orchids	Britain & Ireland	Free	2	78	822
Whitlow-grasses	Britain & Ireland	Free	1	277	273
Larches	Britain & Ireland	Free	1	288	389

By harnessing technology in this way, BSBI was able to deliver opportunities for learning and local engagement, as well as implementing policies and initiatives aimed at counteracting the loss of opportunities for the study of whole-plant biology at schools and universities. A dedicated student webpage was set up, featuring a promotional video, produced by a volunteer member, in which staff and officers set out the various ways in which the Society can offer support to students of environment studies and plant sciences, and early-career researchers. A promotional campaign was initiated in Autumn 2021, whereby academics working in the field of plant sciences across Britain and Ireland were informed of the video, and regularly updated about BSBI grants and other resources for students. BSBI's Skills and Training programme, and the Science & Research Committee, subsequently received record numbers of grant applications for training, study and research.

	Grants			
	2022 applications	2022 awards	2021 applications	2021 Awards
Training grant	29	19	16	15
Plant Study grant	7	7	1	1
Science & Research grant	12	3	10	3
Total	48	29	27	19

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Each recipient of a BSBI grant is invited to write a short report for publication on the BSBI website, and to attend the BSBI Annual Exhibition Meeting and offer a poster, about the course they were able to attend, or the research they were able to carry out, thanks to a BSBI grant. Where appropriate, grant recipients are also encouraged to publish the results of their research in a BSBI periodical.

Work commenced to develop a programme of activities under the 'Botany for All' banner which aims to build a diverse community of botanists to sustain and develop the skills base. To this end, the Society's Skills & Training committee assembled a range of partners from external groups, including Sheffield Environmental Movement, which specialises in community-facing environmental work focusing on marginalised groups, and UK Youth for Nature; a number of initiatives were outlined during the period under review and work is ongoing to take them forward.

BSBI's annual programme of conferences and exhibition meetings also continued to be impacted by the pandemic; these events aim to bring together botanists of national and international standing to mix with the general membership and to pursue themes relevant to the day, and to publicise the results of recent research. By moving these events online, and subsequently uploading recordings of talks and online workshops to the BSBI YouTube channel, more people than ever before were able to attend from across BSBI's geography and beyond, making it possible for those normally prevented from travel by mobility, health, financial or other issues to participate. Feedback suggests that these events were extremely popular although many botanists expressed regret that opportunities for mingling and networking were severely curtailed by the pandemic. The virtual Annual Exhibition Meeting, held in November 2021, attracted more than 400 participants and 24 posters which were exhibited on an event micro-site. The Annual General Meeting was also held virtually on the preceding day and was accompanied by short presentations. Videos from both these events, which comprised ten talks and a panel discussion on promoting diversity, had attracted 2,345 views in total by the end of March 2022.

Similarly, the Scottish Botanists' Conference, held online over a weekend in November 2021, attracted a record 288 participants and the videos on the event playlist, comprising two hour-long training workshops and five talks, had attracted 2,189 views by the end of March 2022. The online Irish Autumn Conference was attended by 78 people and the talks have since been viewed over 1,300 times.

Test centres for Field Identification Skills Certificate (FISC) tests decided, due to both the pandemic and ongoing discussions around the need to develop a sustainable business model, to offer fewer tests during the year under review: BSBI has, since their inception, participated in the development and promotion of FISCs and helped them become recognised as the industry standard for assessing proficiency (at six levels of competence) in field identification skills. The online Identiplant course, supported by BSBI, also ran at a reduced level in 2021, while discussions were undertaken to devise a more effective business model; the aim is to restart the course along more sustainable lines in 2023.

New and revised titles in BSBI's Handbook series are published regularly, dependent as ever on the generously given voluntary services of key authors, to bring authoritative titles to members, and to the public at large, at low cost. During 2021/22, two Handbooks were published, one on Broomrapes, featuring illustrations by a renowned botanical illustrator and one on Dandelions, the latter replacing a previous Handbook on Dandelions published in 1997 and featuring updated distribution maps, identification keys and taxonomy. BSBI members benefited from pre-publication discount offers on both these titles and also on a third Handbook, on Lady's-mantles, scheduled for publication in April 2022. All three titles were accompanied by publicity on social media, by dedicated pages on the BSBI website, by video presentations and, where possible, by interviews with the lead author(s) on the News & Views blog, thereby drawing more traffic to the BSBI website and helping to drive sales, while also raising the Society's profile as a publisher of essential botanical publications.

BSBI's online, Open Access scientific journal, *British & Irish Botany*, continued to disseminate botanical research by academics and amateurs relevant to the study of the British and Irish flora at no cost to authors or readers. By being available to all – not just BSBI members – it is also helping the Society build capacity and fulfil its obligations to the broader scientific community. 34 scientific papers were

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published in the third volume of *British & Irish Botany* and a further six papers in the first issue of the fourth volume which was published in February 2022. The Society's membership newsletter, *BSBI News*, continued to engage and inform botanists at all skill levels; one full free article and a five-page sampler from each issue of *BSBI News* were made available to non-members via the website and promoted across social media platforms; these served as eye-catching advertisements for the benefits of membership and proved an effective recruiting tool. The periodicals portfolio also includes two monthly e-Newsletters, one aimed at active botanical recorders and one aimed at keeping both members and supporters updated about BSBI projects, activities, fundraising, news and events; country newsletters for England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales, all of which made freely available online; and a very popular *News & Views* blog, all of which have helped the Society engage with the wider botanical community.

BSBI seeks to attract members of all ages and backgrounds by setting membership subscriptions at a level affordable to all, with further concessions for students under 25 and for longstanding members over 65; during the period under review, the heavily-subsidised rate for students under 25 was extended to all students, regardless of age, in possession of a student card. In response to demand from members, both current and potential, and with an eye to environmental considerations, a paperless subscription option was also introduced in February 2022, with periodicals made available in browser via a screen reader as well as in the more traditional pdf format. By the end of the period under review, we were delighted that almost 20% of members had opted into this paperless format.

In order to operate sustainably, and to encourage participation and support for our core goals from beyond the Society, BSBI supplements its subscription income with grants and donations from a range of other sources. An *Income Diversification Strategy 2020-2023*, developed during the drafting of the Strategic Plan, was implemented and the Fundraising Manager led on taking this forward during the period under review, leading to a broader range of funding streams, thereby further improving the Society's financial resilience. The Society also has many active volunteers and considers itself very fortunate to be able to draw upon this culture of voluntary service to achieve its charitable objectives at low cost.

Guided nationally by its volunteer expert referees and also by its staff, BSBI supports the botanical survey work carried out by its members as volunteers coordinated locally by its network of volunteer County Recorders. The Society's outreach and training programmes operate in order to complement and engage a growing membership base to contribute to its research projects, to encourage the wider botanical community to participate in citizen science projects supported by the Society, and to provide both of these groups with the necessary skills to do so.

2. Achievements and performance

The Society is now 186 years old and its principal achievement is, arguably, in continuing to do what it has always done to great effect: acting as an information exchange for British and Irish botanists, whether in the field or indoors, and from one generation to the next. The Society and its members have always engaged themselves in the accurate recording of plant distributional data and this long tradition continues – as one member once put it, "*...finality in field botany is fortunately unattainable*".

Membership

BSBI is delighted to report that for the second consecutive year, total membership has not only continued on an upward trend but has seen a surge, possibly linked, at least in part, to increasing awareness of the importance of the natural world – this was widely reported in the media as one of the results of the pandemic and its attendant lockdowns – but also to the expansion and promotion of the various membership services outlined above. As of 31st March 2022, membership was +8.9%, only slight lower than the record increase of +9.2% reported at 31st March 2021; these totals over two consecutive years have outstripped all expectations and, in two years, has already exceeded the three-year target set in BSBI's Strategic Plan to grow membership by +10%.

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	Membership as at 31 March		
	2022	2021	% Increase
UK, Isle of Man & Channel Islands	3,113	2,843	+9%
Ireland	236	229	+3%
Rest of World	61	59	+3%
Total	3,410	3,131	+9%

The positive financial impact of this is described in the Financial Review section 3 below.

Efforts were also undertaken to broaden the range of services and resources available to BSBI members. The members-only area of the BSBI website underwent a substantial refurbishment, with a more user-friendly lay-out and the uploading of more than 100 scientific papers, short notes, book reviews and plant record summaries published in *New Journal of Botany* between 2011 and 2017. An archive in which physical copies of important BSBI publications could be stored and made available to researchers was updated, catalogued and expanded, following a call-out to members for donations. A survey to solicit feedback from members and supporters was carried out; a summary of the responses was reported in the membership newsletter and on the website, and many of the suggestions fed into an online Forum held over three days in March 2022, at which staff, Trustees and committee members came together to brainstorm ideas for the Society going forward.

During the period under review, Trustees continued to consult with stakeholders about BSBI's proposal to give members greater access to plant records held in the Distribution Database (DDb). While there is a strong case for providing enhanced data access for members so that they can better contribute to efforts to understand and conserve our wild flora, the means of achieving this has proved controversial. Some members embraced the idea of access to records at full grid reference precision, whereas other members and stakeholders raised strong concerns about risks to sensitive species, sites or to relationships with landowners, local record centres and organisations contributing records. These concerns reflect in part the different regional pressures faced by County Recorders and local record centres. In response, an extended consultation was held; Trustees carefully considered the feedback and concerns raised and adjusted the proposals to provide a set of options aimed at accommodating the range of views expressed. Each County Recorder was then offered the choice of level of members' access to the DDb in their county based on this set of options (full grid reference, monad or tetrad precision). Going forward, work will be carried out to implement this enhanced access for members by creating a login for members to verify their membership, developing a mirror version of the DDb to reduce performance impacts and creating guidance for those new to the database to help them navigate and find the plant data that interests them.

Public Benefit

The Trustees complied with the duty in section 17 (5) of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission when exercising any powers or duties to which the guidance is relevant. The Society's core activities include facilitating the recording of the distribution of plants in the wild in its area, and publishing expert works and providing training courses and resources to aid accurate plant identification.

BSBI's comprehensive website, www.bsbi.org/, is fundamental in making information about plant distribution and taxonomy freely available as a service to the botanical community. The website is updated twice weekly and is under ongoing review to keep it as versatile, informative and user-friendly as possible and, importantly, to make it accessible to both the increasing proportion of the membership requiring mobile access to it, often when engaged in fieldwork, and also to the wider public and the botanical community.

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The website offers much information on the Society's activities on a free-to-use basis, with almost 300 webpages and a separate digital archive of botanical publications. The period under review saw a 27% increase in the number of county webpages on the site, each one providing contact details of the County Recorder(s) and dedicated to promoting botanical activity and sharing local resources such as Rare Plant Registers, county checklists and newsletters; these pages have helped boost engagement and build capacity at county and regional level, mirroring the national picture and ensuring enduring connectivity at all levels.

New webpages were also created to facilitate the giving of donations and legacies, the further uptake of Gift Aid and the switch to paperless membership; to support those wishing to fundraise for the Society or to become corporate supporters/sponsors; to promote the three new country-level recording initiatives listed above; and to make annual reports from County Recorders easily accessible to all.

Resources such as these are helping to disseminate information to drive a passion for plants, and are establishing the society's website as the first port-of-call for both the accomplished botanist and anyone taking their first steps in botanical recording.

During the year under review, the website attracted 499,020 pageviews by 127,683 users, a slight decrease compared to the previous year when, during lockdown, we had seen 510,992 pageviews by 132,545 users, but a considerable increase when compared to pre-lockdown usage during the period 2019-20, which saw 379,509 pageviews by 87,684 users. BSBI's maps page, where a distribution map can be generated for any plant species recorded in Britain and Ireland and the change in frequency over the decades can be shown, remained by far the most popular page, but the 'Plant ID for Beginners' page, created in 2020 by splitting the previous page of identification resources into two separate pages aimed at botanists at different skill levels, saw a 35% increase, suggesting that resources for beginners are particularly valued. See the table below.

Webpage Views 2021/22 vs 2020/21				
Rank	Webpage	Views 2021/22	Views 2020/21	% Increase/ (Decrease)
1	Maps <i>bsbi.org/maps</i>	120,908	123,160	-2%
2	Homepage <i>bsbi.org/</i>	68,243	71,089	-4%
3	Plant ID for beginners <i>bsbi.org/plant-id-getting-started</i>	17,350	12,760	+35%
4	Training Courses <i>bsbi.org/training-courses</i>	16,310	17,063	-4%
	Total	222,811	224,072	-1%

BSBI members, staff and volunteers continued to present lectures to the public and support conservation and outreach projects both locally and nationally, with the various online platforms, whose popularity soared during lockdown, making it possible to reach new audiences across Britain and Ireland without the time, expense and environmental impact of travel.

BSBI also continued to build links and strengthen relationships with print and broadcast media; during the period under review, comments by BSBI staff and officers, including mention of the Society, featured in periodicals including *The Telegraph* (on foraging wild plants); *The Guardian* (on the benefits to wild plants of fencing off beach areas for ground-nesting birds); *Metro* and *The Mail Online* (on naturalised tomato plants); and in *Country Life* (on poppies, to tie in with Remembrance Day coverage).

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One of the BSBI's expert referees on brambles was interviewed on BBC 6 Music by celebrity broadcaster Lauren Laverne, thus engaging an audience that scientific societies generally struggle to reach. The Society's New Year Plant Hunt was featured in *The Guardian*, *The Independent*, *House Beautiful*, and *Horticulture Week*, and the joint County Recorder for County Tyrone was interviewed about the Hunt on *Mooney Goes Wild*, RTE Ireland's flagship countryside programme.

The story of a discovery by BSBI's County Recorder for the Outer Hebrides of 'Scotland's loneliest apple tree' was picked up by *The Times*, *The Independent*, *The Week Junior* and *The Sunday Post*, which also reported the re-finding by the BSBI County Recorder for the Inner Hebrides of 'Scotland's shortest grass'. During the period under review, the *Irish Examiner* covered the discovery (made by the BSBI joint County Recorder for County Kerry during 2020/21) of a rare tropical fern in Ireland. Media coverage of projects run by BSBI in partnership included an article about Plant Alert, run in partnership with University of Coventry, in *New Scientist*, and a feature on the Irish Spring Flowers initiative, run in partnership with the National Biodiversity Data Centre, appeared in the *Irish Examiner*. The discovery of an orchid new to Britain in early 2022 was covered by *The Guardian* and *The Daily Mail* following interviews with orchid experts within BSBI. BSBI activities and members were also featured in local newspapers covering such diverse areas as Norfolk, Galway, County Durham and Denbighshire.

The Society also continued to build its social media profile and members offered plant identification support to the wider public on a weekly basis under the *#wildflowerhour* banner.

	Social media followers as at 31 March		
	2022	2021	% Increase
Facebook (Britain)	9,500	8,594	+11%
Facebook (Ireland)	3,150	2,902	+9%
Twitter	38,838	35,146	+11%
Instagram	6,038	3,500	+73%
Total	57,526	50,142	+15%

In all of these ways, the Society is able to inform the public and those with an interest in conservation and to meet the charitable objects for which it was established. The Board continues to ensure the Society will remain focused on meeting the needs of both its growing number of volunteers, members and also of the wider public, building on its achievements to date and facing the future with increased confidence.

The adoption and implementation of *BSBI's Strategic Plan 2021-2024* has enabled BSBI to continue to move forward in a sustainable and resilient way, building on almost two centuries of achievements while being ready to grow and adapt to the challenges of a rapidly changing world and deliver its goals. As outlined in the Strategic Plan, there are both opportunities and threats in our environment which BSBI is well placed to respond to, including providing the data to underpin conservation and land management decisions and strategy to address biodiversity loss and climate change and continuing to develop and broaden interest in botany and address 'plant blindness' and the need and demand for greater botanical awareness, provision of grants and training opportunities to develop plant identification skills, and outreach opportunities to support engagement at local and national level.

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3. Financial Review

Overview

The Board of Trustees reports Net Expenditure of -£18,125 (2021: Net Income £180,698) for the year under review.

The Board is delighted to report the underlying Operating Deficit (*) has yet again reduced year on year such that a small Operating Surplus is reported in 2022. This is a remarkable achievement and demonstrates solid long-term progress towards delivering the Society's operations in a financially sustainable manner.

	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Operating Surplus (Deficit) £000 *	3	(15)	(25)	(33)	(61)	(146)	(128)	(178)

*Operating Surplus (Deficit) on the Unrestricted General Fund. In 2022 this is a surplus of £3,280.

Note that a deficit of (£44,360) was reported on the Unrestricted Strategic Development Reserve, the total net Operating Deficit is (£41,080) as per the SOFA at page 20.

The Board has, however, budgeted an Operating Deficit for 2022/23, when there is a focus on continuing to reshape the charity and lay the foundations of long-term financial sustainability.

Investments

Total Return on investments (net losses and income) was £33,120 (2021: £220,195). As a percentage, this is 4.0% (2021: 27.9%) of the average investment during the year. Because of the "bounce-back" in 2020/21 after the initial negative impact of Covid in March 2020, investment gains in 2021/22 were muted in comparison. Also, in March 2022, the stock market was badly hit by reverberations from the emerging Russia-Ukraine war, the volatility from which is ongoing.

At year end, the Society had Net Assets of £988,139 (2021: £1,006,264) held as a diversified investment portfolio of £751,475 and net current assets of £236,664.

At £326,542, cash at bank is higher than before (2021: £248,720). A high level of cash is in accordance with BSBI's desire to hold an amount equivalent to at least 12 months' budgeted net expenditure in order to protect against the potential risk of a turn to negative stock market volatility and its impact on the Society's short to medium term operations. This approach has proved sensible when managing the negative impacts of Covid and the war in Ukraine. If markets settle, it may mean that less than usual cash is withdrawn from the investment portfolio in Autumn 2022.

Income

The Board is delighted to report that, at £459,438 (2021: £396,354), total income is +16% versus the previous year. Some of this, such as the huge % uplift in botanical conferences & courses, is the reintroduction of chargeable educational events post Covid. Income from botanical publications, however, reflects that three pre-publication offers were launched in the year (2021/22) including the hugely successful Dandelions Handbook selling almost 450 copies, the best-selling launch of the last five years.

Subscriptions and related Gift Aid rose strongly; +16% to £132k and 30% of unrestricted income, (2021: 31%). As explained earlier, this reflects another year of spectacular, +9%, membership growth (2021 +9%); last year we felt this was a silver-lining of Covid however we are delighted this growth has continued, unabated. Importantly, we now measure membership retention as a key KPI (% of

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members choosing to remain members throughout the year) and we are pleased that this has remained high, at 87% (2021: 90%) in the year regardless of the remarkable growth in membership and these indicators give us confidence that BSBI continues to deliver what members want.

Grants income grew by +21% in the reporting period and continues to be hugely important to BSBI (2022: £91k vs 2021: £75k) and we thank our many partners, whom we name below, for their continued support of all that BSBI achieves.

Botanical Data Interpretation and Access income generated £102k (2021 £118k) and we are pleased to help the organisations achieve their aims through our work. This includes Natural England, who funded work on the development of botanical heatmaps to support decision-making around tree planting and other land management. The BSBI continues to provide data access to a range of conservation and land management organisations including the National Trust and Plantlife as well as a number of universities and institutes to undertake scientific research on a wide range of topics.

Thousands of members supported the Society this year, and individuals and organisations made donations and contributions of all sizes; from major gifts, sponsorships, grants, for attending events, towards BSBI's important Atlas 2020 project, for sustaining the BSBI Scottish Officer post and gifts in Wills. Whilst some of these are made anonymously, BSBI wishes to thank by name the following individuals and organisations who have generously supported BSBI's projects and goals. It also thanks those who have tapped into BSBI's huge botanical resources and supported its aims; without whom BSBI could not continue to achieve all that it does:

Robert Clutterbuck Charitable Trust	National Trust
Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences	Woodland Trust
7 Pillars of Wisdom Charitable Trust	Joshua Styles
Harrogate & District Naturalists' Society	Thriplow Charitable Trust
The Estate of the late Mr Philip H Oswald	Lennox Hannay Charitable Trust
Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts and its regional network	Naturesave Trust

BSBI also thanks Clive A Stace BSc PhD DSc, for a generous gift of botanical publications, reference materials and bookcases to allow BSBI's botanical library archive, based in Harrogate which is available for members' use. We also thank many others encouraged by Clive to give books for this purpose.

The Society also expresses its gratitude to all the other unnamed organisations and individuals who have generously given donations and grants to BSBI this year. Every amount matters for the advancement of the understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of wild plants.

In addition, national statutory agencies, namely Natural England (NE), Environment Agency (EA), Naturescot, National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) in Ireland and Natural Resources Wales (NRW) continue to be long-term supporters and income received from them contributes to supporting those of the Society's staff most closely engaged in the programmes and projects of mutual benefit.

Expenditure

Unrestricted Fund expenditure increased by +25% in the year to £484,428 (2021 £386,459). A few notable highlights are covered below.

As explained earlier, there were changes in the staff structure in the year. A new BSBI Fundraising Manager role was created in March 2021 to focus on delivering BSBI's *Income Diversification Strategy 2020-2023*. The pay costs of this role are reflected in the increase in Expenditure on Raising Funds (Note 5). The Return on Investment (RoI) of this role was recently assessed at 2.1 and this continues to be monitored against expectations.

The pay costs of the new CEO role are reflected in the higher level of Governance Staff Costs and Expenses (Note 6), as are the cost of initiatives undertaken to deliver BSBI's Strategic Plan (£8,987)

ANNUAL REPORT (continued)

For the year ended 31 March 2022

Sadly, despite extending claim windows, most Training & Education grants awarded went unclaimed in the year because of Covid restrictions and the cancellation of botanical courses. This led to the reported net reversal of the cost of grants previously awarded (£1,897).

Valuing Volunteers

BSBI continues to direct the use of its financial resources with great care and is immensely fortunate, as in previous years, in being able to supplement these financial resources with the gift of time freely and generously given by its volunteers, whether via membership of its Board of Trustees and Standing Committees, 300+ members engaged as County Recorders or national plant referees, many of whom played invaluable and guiding roles in swelling BSBI's DDb to more than 50 million records, making it one of the world's largest databases of biological records. Others actively support the plant recording, training and engagement activities led locally by the County Recorders, the efforts of which have culminated in near completion of the huge Atlas 2020 project, the results of which will be published in the *Atlas 2020 Summary* in Spring 2023. As mentioned at page 8, annual reports celebrating their valuable work can be found here: <https://bsbi.org/local-botany>

The nature and scale of volunteer time given to BSBI each year is vast (for example 784,412 new records were added to the BSBI's Distribution Database in 2021/22) and we know that its financial value dwarfs BSBI's income many times over. BSBI is indebted to all of its volunteers. It simply could not fulfil its objectives without them and the Board gives its sincere thanks to every person who generously devotes time and effort to helping BSBI thrive; all these people make BSBI the vibrant organisation it is today. Establishing ways in which we can place a more accurate value on this vast volunteer contribution will take time and gradual refinement, however we feel it is increasingly important that we do so.

Summary

Overall, we report on a year of positives and nimbly adapting to change; a step change to return to more normal operations following Covid's significant impact, responding to members' needs to build a second year of strong membership growth and, in a challenging fundraising landscape, many achievements of which to feel proud. BSBI has been led throughout by the Board of Trustees and Julia Hanmer, during her first year as Chief Executive. This strong team will continue to steer the delivery of *BSBI's Strategic Plan 2021-2024* and long-term financial sustainability whilst working towards a world where plants thrive and are valued.

4. Structure, governance and management

Constitution

The Society was incorporated as a company limited by guarantee in England and Wales (No. 08553976) on 3 June 2013 with Articles of Association that specify its aims and objects and governance. It is also registered as a Charity in England and Wales (No. 1152954) and in Scotland (No. SC038675). It has no share capital.

The Society changed its Articles of Association following a Special Resolution passed at BSBI's AGM on 21 November 2020 to allow Trustees to agree to hold any meeting by suitable electronic means where presence electronically will be deemed equivalent to meeting in person. This change has been beneficial through Covid and the inclusivity and cost saving benefits mean that BSBI will continue to do this from time to time, regardless of the relaxation of Covid restrictions. The Society is governed by a Board of Directors which is known as the Board of Trustees, as all Company Directors are also Charity Trustees. Day-to-day management is delegated to the Chief Executive Officer.

Board of Trustees (Directors)

In terms of its Articles of Association, the Society is governed by a Board of Directors, members of which are also Charity Trustees. Directors are elected by the members of the Society in an Annual General Meeting (AGM). The Board may also co-opt Directors, who then serve until the next AGM. There is a maximum number of 12 Directors. One third of the Directors (other than those currently co-

BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND

ANNUAL REPORT (continued)

For the year ended 31 March 2022

opted) retire by rotation at the next AGM (17 November 2022) and may be re-elected for a renewable term of up to three years, up to a maximum of nine years. Trustees of the Society, all of whom are elected, who served during the year covered by these accounts and were in post at 31 March 2022 and at the date of approval of these accounts, except as noted, are set out below together with their dates of first appointment.

Dr CJ Miles (Chair)	Appointed 25 Nov 2017
Prof AI Denholm	Appointed 3 June 2013
Prof MJ Crawley	Appointed 24 July 2013
Dr CM Cheffings	Appointed 24 Nov 2014
Dr PR Bisson	Appointed 25 May 2016
Dr JS Faulkner	Appointed 25 Nov 2017
Prof A Fitter FRS	Appointed 25 Nov 2017, resigned 19 Nov 2021
Dr S Knapp	Appointed 25 Nov 2017
Mr AD Thomas	Appointed 25 Nov 2017
Dr S Gater	Appointed 4 Dec 2019
Dr M Dean	Appointed 21 Nov 2020
Dr HJ Crouch	Appointed 22 June 2021
Miss KN Jones	Appointed 19 Nov 2021

At present, the membership of the Board of Trustees is reserved by the Articles of Association for members of the charitable company. All Trustees are made aware of their obligations and the charitable company's Articles of Association and are provided with regular updates on its financial performance and status. Trustees are encouraged to avail themselves of Charity Commission guidance, including "The Essential Trustee" and other Trustee training material is made available. Trustees also have unrestricted access to the Board Chair and the Society's staff.

The Board utilises a skills matrix to identify gaps in its group competencies so that selection, induction and training of Trustees is targeted as effectively as possible.

Officers

The principal honorary officers of the Society are the President, the Chair of the Board of Trustees, the Honorary General Secretary, Honorary Company Secretary and Honorary Treasurer. They are assisted by three staff members: Chief Executive, Head of Science and Finance Manager.

Details of other office bearers, including County Recorders and the panel of Referees and Specialists, are to be found in the *BSBI Yearbook 2022*.

The Board, the Staff and the Society's Committees

The Board of Directors are the Society's legal trustees which governs all its activities and is assisted on a day-to-day basis by the Chief Executive (previously Head of Operations) and they together co-ordinate the work of the principal honorary office bearers and the staff, and their interaction with the Board and the Society's membership.

As at 31 March 2022 the Society employed 10 staff (2021: 9), equivalent to 9 full time posts (2021: 7), to work with the principal honorary office bearers in co-ordinating, interpreting and supporting the work of its volunteers and in the administration of the Society's affairs. The Head of Operations left BSBI in January 2021 and the new Chief Executive Officer began in April 2021 so neither is included in the 31 March 2021 staff numbers above. Historically, there has been a Country Officer for each of the four countries in which BSBI operates, however the Wales Officer role was vacated in March 2020. There are three Science staff (Head of Science, one specialising in data management and one who divides his time between Science & England Officer). Finally, one in each of financial, fundraising, membership and communications roles.

BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND

ANNUAL REPORT (continued)

For the year ended 31 March 2022

The *BSBI Yearbook 2022* sets out full details of BSBI's seven Committees: four Country Committees and three Permanent Working Committees; the BSBI website also lists the members of Committees and the Board, and provides contact details for each.

The Country Committees for England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland (comprising in this context Northern and the Republic of Ireland), give a more localised focus to the Society's work and play an important role in the governance structure, working alongside Country Officers to drive engagement at national level and showcase their country's work to the membership and to the wider public.

For example, during the period under review, the **Committee for Scotland** played an important role in the organisation of the Scottish Botanists' Conference, which attracted a record number of participants; the **Committee for Ireland** supported the Ireland Officer with organisation of, and participation in, Ireland's Spring and Autumn Conferences; the County Recorders who sit on the **Committee for Wales** led on recording activity in the absence of a Wales Officer, and pioneered a hybrid Welsh AGM with some people attending via Zoom and some in person; and the recently-launched **Committee for England** held well-attended online Annual Meetings. Editors of the four country newsletters sit on Country Committees, which also played a pivotal role in the development of the three country recoding projects outlined above.

BSBI's three Permanent Working Committees are as follows:

1. The **Events & Communications Committee** organises national events, conferences and field meetings, such as the New Year Plant Hunt and the Annual Exhibition Meeting. It also has oversight of the Society's outreach and social media activities, website and newsletters. It is assisted by the Society's Communications Officer and other staff members as and when required.
2. The **Science & Data Committee** has primary responsibility for BSBI's plant distribution and monitoring studies, including maintaining the Vice-County Recorder network and the panel of plant referees and specialists. It also has oversight of the Society's scientific journal, *British & Irish Botany*, and administers grants to assist the publication of local Floras and similar works. It is assisted by the staff of the BSBI Science Unit. Its Science and Research sub-Committee allocates research grants.
3. The **Skills & Training Committee** co-ordinates these activities for the Society, and awards training and plant study grants. It also has oversight of the Society's series of Handbooks for the identification of difficult plants. During the period under review, this Committee launched the "Botany for All" programme and assembled a range of partners from external groups to help deliver the goal of building a diverse community of botanists to sustain and develop the skills base.

Investment Policy

The Society's investment powers are governed by the Trustee Act 2000. The Trustees have approved an Investment Policy Statement and have delegated discretionary management of the Society's investments to its Investment Manager, Brewin Dolphin.

The Society has an **Investment Committee**, made up of at least three Trustees, which meets once a year with the Society's Investment Manager to review investment performance and to hold them to account. The Investment Committee's responsibilities are set out in a Terms of Reference which underwent its last triennial review in Autumn 2020.

BSBI requires diversification amongst shares, bonds and cash, capable of delivering income and portfolio growth combined at 2% over inflation in the long term after expenses. Investment income is accumulated, however it remains readily accessible through realisation of liquid investments.

Trustees recognise the importance of BSBI investing in a socially responsible manner which promotes the protection and health of the natural environment. With that in mind, the Board has been guided by professional advisers and Investment Committee and it approved an Ethical Position Statement (EPS)

BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND

ANNUAL REPORT (continued)

For the year ended 31 March 2022

in September 2019 which sets out practical measures taken in pursuit of these aims. The EPS will be reviewed by Investment Committee and the Board in Autumn 2022.

Grant-making Policy

Details of BSBI's Policy in relation to grants for the publication of works on the British and Irish flora, for training and education courses and for botanical study and research are set out on the BSBI website.

Risk Management

The Trustees have examined the Society's Risk Register documenting the major risks to which the Society is exposed, and in particular those related to the operations and finances of the Society. The Trustees are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate and control the Society's exposure to the major risks. In particular:

- i. The Society has in place a comprehensive policy of Trustee Indemnity Insurance.
- ii. The Society maintains a balance sheet in which listed investments represent substantially all of its net assets. Consequently, it is exposed to market risk which may materially affect its financial performance in any year of account. The risk is mitigated in a number of ways: the investment portfolio is diversified and is subject to the discretionary management of an independent professional Investment Manager, who follows BSBI's Investment Policy and agreed investment risk profile, reporting to the Trustees in writing quarterly and in person annually; the Trustees review the financial performance arising from its operations and its investments separately and take a long-term view of investment performance against targets.
- iii. Exchange rate risk is managed by most of the investments being denominated in £ Sterling.
- iv. The Society is exposed to cash flow and liquidity risk as a result of running a deficit budget, whilst aiming to maintain its investment base from which it derives income and the capacity for gains. The Society's investment portfolio is managed on a discretionary basis. The individual investments are freely traded and so it is possible to withdraw funds on short notice.
- v. An annual budget is set and approved by the Board which is then applied to financial decisions made throughout the year.
- vi. The letting of contracts and payment of invoices is strictly controlled by the Chief Executive and the Finance Manager, and Trustees monitor bank balances so as to ensure that, at any time, the Society has in place sufficient liquid funds to meet its liabilities as they fall due.
- vii. The United Kingdom's exit from the European Union on 31 January 2020 has had no material impact on the operations or finances of the Society and this is kept under review from time to time. Income from outside the UK represents a very small percentage of the Society's income and BSBI has continued to conduct its activities throughout the biogeographical area encompassing Great Britain, Ireland, the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands, and to engage with botanists further afield.
- viii. The impact of the Covid pandemic and the appropriate response to the ongoing risks posed are reducing, however the situation continues to be monitored by Trustees. See Note 18.

Financial Reserves Policies

The Board reviewed its Reserves Policy in March 2022. This Policy sets out why BSBI holds its particular level of reserves and how the Board seeks to ensure financial sustainability.

BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND

ANNUAL REPORT (continued)

For the year ended 31 March 2022

The Society has two Unrestricted Funds:

- 1) **The General Fund**; this provides Working Capital for the continuation of the Society's activities and as a buffer against fluctuations in income. It affords BSBI the ability to promote itself and, critically, to continue to raise further funds to ensure its long-term financial sustainability. Trustees currently consider that £0.5M is the minimum acceptable level and this is periodically reviewed.
- 2) **The Strategic Development Fund**; this designated fund was created following a decision by the Board in June 2020. Its purpose is to fund the one-off or short-term costs of delivering the Strategic Plan; building financial resilience more quickly and effectively than might otherwise be possible. Expenditure from this Fund is reported at Note 14.

Three Restricted Income Funds are maintained, currently valued at £4,864 (2021: £5,057):

- 1) The **Presidents' Awards Fund** provides for an annual award (currently £400pa) for outstanding contributions to botany.
- 2) The **Welsh Flora Fund** is for small ad hoc grants towards botanical publications relating to North Wales.
- 3) The **Scottish Officer Fund** receives income (currently £16kpa) restricted to meet expenditure relating to the post of the Scottish Officer. This fund is normally fully expended during the year.

Note that the **HLF Grant Fund** which represented grant monies received from Heritage Lottery Fund and meets expenditure incurred in delivering the aims of the grant closed in early 2021.

5. Reference and administrative details

Founded	1836, as the Botanical Society of London (Present name adopted 2013)
Incorporation	Registered 3 June 2013 A Company Limited by Guarantee in England and Wales No. 08553976
Registered Office	28 Chipchase Grove, Durham, DH1 3FA
Registered Charity	England and Wales No. 1152954 Scotland No. SC038675
Bankers	CAF Bank Ltd, Kings Hill, West Malling, ME19 4TA
Investment Manager	Brewin Dolphin, 12 Smithfield Street, EC1A 9BD
Independent Examiner	WMT, Verulam Point, Station Way, St Albans, AL1 5HE
Legal Advisers	Stone King LLP, 91 Charterhouse St, EC1M 6HR
Principal Officers	
Chair of the Board of Trustees	Dr CJ Miles
Honorary Treasurer	On hold
President (and former Chair of Council)	Ms L Farrell
Honorary General Secretary	Dr S Gater
Company Secretary	Dr S Gater

BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND

ANNUAL REPORT (continued)

For the year ended 31 March 2022

Principal Officers (continued)

Chief Executive	Ms JC Hanmer
Head of Science	Dr KJ Walker
Finance Manager	Ms J Etherington

Website www.bsbi.org/

6. Covid

The Covid pandemic has had a significant – and, in some cases, permanent - impact on individuals, businesses and organisations worldwide, including BSBI.

Throughout the pandemic, the Board continued to meet regularly, using teleconferencing technology and email to monitor the risks, consider relevant advice and approve mitigating actions. Covid-related control measures were implemented to protect staff, members and others, with suitable changes to normal activities. Committee meetings were held virtually, events and fieldwork had to be cancelled or postponed to protect all involved, however many activities and a wealth of information were provided on BSBI's website and many members enjoyed engaging from home in these new and varied ways and continue to do so. BSBI staff and Trustees kept themselves aware of Government legislation and guidance in each country, followed mitigating actions and shared information appropriately with members. Reflections on Covid are considered in more detail at Note 18.

Trustees are grateful to the dedicated work of staff and volunteers, and are mindful of the impact on workload and morale. BSBI's financial position outlook has been carefully considered and assessed by the Board and although it acknowledges the ongoing uncertain economic and societal impact of the pandemic, which is profound and disruptive, Trustees are confident that the Society remains a going concern and is determined to seek out opportunities and apply the best governance possible to see this maintained into the future.

ANNUAL REPORT (continued)

For the year ended 31 March 2022

7. Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The Trustees (who are also directors of BSBI for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and the appended Accounts in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that year. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions relating to small companies within part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

Approved by the Board of Trustees on 6th September 2022 and signed on its behalf by:



Dr CJ Miles, Chair of the Board



Prof AI Denholm, Trustee

BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

To the Trustees of the Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland for the year ended 31 March 2022 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows and related notes.

This report is made solely to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with section 145 of the Charities Act 2011. My work has been undertaken so that I might state to the charity's trustees those matters I am required to state to them in this report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, I do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity's trustees as a body, for my work, for this report, or for the opinions I have formed.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the Company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 ('the 2005 Act'), the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) and the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act'). You are satisfied that the accounts of the Company are not required by charity or company law to be audited and have chosen instead to have an independent examination.

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of the Company's accounts carried out under section 44(1)(c) of the 2005 Act and section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the requirements of Regulation 11 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) and the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

An independent examination does not involve gathering all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently does not cover all the matters that an auditor considers in giving their opinion on the financial statements. The planning and conduct of an audit go beyond the limited assurance that an independent examination can provide. Consequently, I express no opinion as to whether the financial statements present a 'true and fair' view and my report is limited to those specific matters set out in the independent examiner's statement.

Independent examiner's statement

Since the Company is required by company law to prepare its accounts on an accruals basis and is registered as a charity in Scotland, your examiner must be a member of a body listed in Regulation 11(2) of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended). I can confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of ICAEW, which is one of the listed bodies.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act and Regulation 4 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations; or
- the accounts do not accord with those records with the accounting requirements of Regulation 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006; or
- the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the financial statements give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
- the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



EE Irvine FCA
WMT - Chartered Accountants,
Verulam Point, Station Way, St Albans, AL1 5HE

Dated 7th September 2022

BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (INCORPORATING AN INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)
For the year ended 31 March 2022

	Note	Unrestricted Funds 2022 £	Restricted Funds 2022 £	Total Funds 2022 £	Unrestricted Funds 2021 £	Restricted Funds 2021 £	Total Funds 2021 £
INCOME FROM							
Donations and legacies	2	278,307	16,000	294,307	200,047	29,760	229,807
Charitable activities	3	147,221	-	147,221	145,364	-	145,364
Investments	4	17,820	90	17,910	21,183	-	21,183
Total		443,348	16,090	459,438	366,594	29,760	396,354
EXPENDITURE ON							
Raising of funds	5	95,743	-	95,743	57,942	7,783	65,725
Charitable activities	6	388,685	16,400	405,085	328,517	27,657	356,174
Total		484,428	16,400	500,828	386,459	35,440	421,899
OPERATING (DEFICIT)/SURPLUS		(41,080)	(310)	(41,390)	(19,865)	(5,680)	(25,545)
OTHER RECOGNISED (LOSSES)/GAINS							
Realised (losses)/gains on investments	9	66,283	335	66,618	65,943	350	66,293
Unrealised (losses)/gains on investments	9	(43,135)	(218)	(43,353)	139,212	738	139,950
Total (losses)/gains on investments		23,148	117	23,265	205,155	1,088	206,243
NET (EXPENDITURE)/INCOME		(17,932)	(193)	(18,125)	185,290	(4,592)	180,698
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS							
Total funds brought forward		1,001,207	5,057	1,006,264	813,137	12,429	825,566
Transfer of funds		-	-	-	2,780	(2,780)	-
Net movement in funds as above		(17,932)	(193)	(18,125)	185,290	(4,592)	180,698
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		983,275	4,864	988,139	1,001,207	5,057	1,006,264

BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND

BALANCE SHEET

As at 31 March 2022

	Note	2022		2021	
		£	£	£	£
Fixed Assets					
Investments	9		751,475		818,355
			<hr/>		<hr/>
Current Assets					
Stocks	10	23,681		23,902	
Debtors	11	78,147		79,570	
Cash at bank		326,452		248,720	
			<hr/>		<hr/>
		428,280		352,192	
Liabilities					
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	12	191,616		164,283	
			<hr/>		<hr/>
Net Current Assets			236,664		187,909
			<hr/>		<hr/>
Net Assets			988,139		1,006,264
			<hr/>		<hr/>
Funds					
Restricted funds	13		4,864		5,057
Unrestricted funds	14				
General Fund			804,108		880,471
Strategic Development Fund			179,167		120,736
			<hr/>		<hr/>
			988,139		1,006,264
			<hr/>		<hr/>

For the year ending 31 March 2022 the company was entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies. The members have not required the company to obtain an audit in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006. The Directors acknowledge their responsibility for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and for the preparation of accounts. These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

Approved by the Board of Trustees on 6th September 2022 and signed on its behalf by:



Dr CJ Miles, Chair of the Board



Prof AI Denholm, Trustee

Company registration number 08553976. Charity registration number 1152954 (England and Wales) and SC038675 (Scotland)

BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

For the year ended 31 March 2022

	Note	2022		2021	
		£	£	£	£
Cash flows from operating activities					
Cash used in operating activities	17	(22,291)		(2,918)	
Cash generated from interest on deposits		23		40	
		<hr/>		<hr/>	
Net cash used in operating activities		(22,268)		(2,878)	
Cash flows from investing activities					
Proceeds from sale of investments	9	100,000		70,000	
		<hr/>		<hr/>	
Net cash provided by investing activities		100,000		70,000	
		<hr/>		<hr/>	
Increase (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents in the year		77,732		67,122	
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		248,720		181,598	
		<hr/>		<hr/>	
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year		326,452		248,720	
		<hr/>		<hr/>	

Analysis of Changes in Net Debt

	At 1 April 2021 £	Cashflow £	At 31 March 2022 £
Cash at Bank	248,720	77,732	326,452

BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

For the year ended 31 March 2022

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of accounting

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, subject to the revaluation of investments to market value, in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (2nd Edition, effective January 2019) ('Charities SORP') and the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006 and UK Generally Accepted Practice as it applies from 1 January 2015.

The Trustees have assessed whether the use of the going concern basis of accounting is appropriate and have considered possible events or conditions that might give rise to significant doubt on the ability of the charity to continue as a going concern. This assessment covered a period of 12 months subsequent to the date of approval of these financial statements. The Trustees have concluded that the charity has adequate financial and other resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future, and that there are no factors of which they are aware which could put in jeopardy the charity's going concern status during or beyond this period. Accordingly, the financial statements are prepared on the going concern basis.

Judgments in applying accounting policies and key sources of estimation uncertainty

The preparation of the financial statements requires management to make judgments, estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts reported for assets and liabilities as at the balance sheet date and the amounts reported for revenues and expenses during the year. The nature of estimation means the actual outcomes could differ from those estimates.

There are no material key sources of estimation uncertainty that could have an impact on the financial statements.

Statement on Public Benefit

Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland is a public benefit entity under the Financial Reporting Standard 102 (FRS 102) and has selected its accounting policies accordingly.

Recognition of Income

Income is accounted for when the Society has entitlement, there is reasonable certainty of receipt and the amount is measurable. Income is deferred in respect of funding where the funding relates to a future period in order to match it to the expenditure profile. The specific bases used are as follows:

Subscription income and the related Gift Aid (where applicable) is accounted for in the period to which it relates. As subscriptions cover calendar years, the portion attributable to the subscription year falling after the balance sheet date is deferred.

Income from grants and donations for specific purposes received in advance of the related expenditure is carried forward as deferred income. Income is only deferred where restrictions are imposed that amount to pre-conditions for use. Contract income and grants received in arrears are recognised in line with underlying expenditure or activities, or, where appropriate, on a straight line or similar basis.

Legacies are recognised as receivable when the amount receivable is reasonably certain (i.e. probable) as to amount and timing, and not until probate has been granted in respect of the legatee's estate.

BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (continued)

For the year ended 31 March 2022

Recognition of Income (contd)

Donated facilities are recognised where the value to the Society can be quantified.

Other income, including investment income and donations, is recognised when received.

The Society's County Recorders are authorised to charge, in their own names, for services in extracting and interpreting data relating to their own area from the Society's Plant Distribution Database (DDb), for commercial use, on the understanding that these charges represent a partial recovery of expenses incurred in their voluntary services to the Society. Such transactions are therefore outside the scope of these accounts.

Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised when a liability is incurred. Contractual arrangements are recognised as services are supplied.

Costs of raising funds are those costs incurred in attracting income.

Charitable activities comprise those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them. Where employees are engaged in more than one of the Society's charitable activities - survey and interpretation, botanical education, publications and website, or governance – related costs and expenses which cannot be allocated directly are apportioned on the basis of estimated usage.

Grants for scientific work are charged in the year when the offer is given to the recipient, except in those cases where the grant is conditional. Training grants are charged when the conditions attached to the grant or award has been met and disbursement has been approved. Publication grants are charged when disbursed, normally shortly before publication.

Governance costs, which are included in the costs of charitable activities, include those associated with meeting the constitutional and statutory requirements of the Society and include the professional fees and costs linked to the strategic management of the charity.

Fixed assets and depreciation

The Society's policy is to capitalise expenditure on fixed assets amounting to more than £1,000 per individual item. When fixed assets are recognised, depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost of each asset over its expected useful life, which for office equipment such as computer hardware and software and other similar assets is estimated at four years. Fully depreciated assets are written off.

Investments

Investments are carried at market value. The related net unrealised gain or loss on the portfolio is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities separately from other income and expenditure. Realised net gains or losses arise on the sale of individual investments and represent the net total of the excess or deficit of net sales proceeds over the original cost.

Stocks

Publications and other stocks are valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value.

BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (continued)

For the year ended 31 March 2022

Financial Instruments

The Society only enters into basic financial instruments transactions that result in the recognition of financial assets and liabilities such as debtors and creditors. Financial instruments are initially measured at transaction value. They are assessed at the end of each reporting period for objective evidence of impairment. If objective evidence of impairment is found, an impairment loss is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities.

Debtors, Cash at Bank and Creditors

Debtors - short term debtors are measured at transaction price, less any impairment losses.

Cash and cash equivalents - cash and cash equivalents comprise cash at bank and in hand and demand deposits with banks.

Creditors - short term creditors are measured at the transaction price.

Holiday pay accrual

A liability is recognised for short-term compensated absences where employees have accumulated a right to paid annual leave (holiday pay) but had not fully used it at the balance sheet date. The accrual is measured at the undiscounted salary and social security cost of the future holiday entitlement.

Operating leases

Rentals payable under operating leases are charged to expenditure on a straight-line basis over the term of the lease.

Pensions

Staff employment contracts include a provision for an employer's pension contribution based on a fixed percentage of salary to be paid into a personal pension policy established by the member of staff. Contributions are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities as they fall due.

Foreign Currencies

Transactions in foreign currencies are translated at rates prevailing at the date of the transaction. Balances denominated in foreign currencies are translated at the rate of exchange prevailing at the year-end. All exchange differences are taken to the Statement of Financial Activities. The only foreign currency the Society currently transacts in is euros.

Taxation

The Society is recognised as a Charity by HMRC and its activities therefore support its primary purpose of delivering its stated charitable objectives. Accordingly, its income and capital gains are exempt from Corporation Tax. Also, Gift Aid income (at 25 pence in £) is recoverable on subscriptions and donations received under a Gift Aid declaration. The Society receives no similar exemption in respect of Value Added Tax (VAT). Income and Expenditure is reported net of VAT, unless it is irrecoverable.

Fund accounting

The Society's accounts are an amalgamation of funds which are defined as follows:

Unrestricted funds – are those funds available for general or designated uses by the Society at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of its stated charitable objectives.

Restricted funds - are those funds where restrictive covenants were established by the original donor(s) as to what expenditure could be charged against them.

All income and expenditure of the Society is included in the Statement of Financial Activities.

BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (continued)

For the year ended 31 March 2022

2. DONATIONS AND LEGACIES	2022	2021
	£	£
Subscriptions (including associated Gift Aid)	131,961	114,222
Donations (including associated Gift Aid) and sundry income	38,451	23,615
Grants	90,895	60,010
Legacies	17,000	2,200
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total Unrestricted Fund income	278,307	200,047
Restricted Income:		
Grants	-	14,760
Donations	16,000	15,000
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	294,307	229,807
	<hr/>	<hr/>
3. INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES		
Botanical data interpretation and access	101,998	117,658
Botanical conferences and courses	9,875	2,888
Botanical publications	35,072	23,818
Journal support and royalties	276	1,000
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	147,221	145,364
	<hr/>	<hr/>
4. INCOME FROM INVESTMENTS		
Investment income (Restricted £90 (2021 - £NIL))	17,887	21,143
Bank deposit interest	23	40
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	17,910	21,183
	<hr/>	<hr/>
5. EXPENDITURE ON RAISING FUNDS		
Staff costs of membership stewardship	30,381	30,185
Staff costs of fundraising (Restricted £NIL (2021 – £7,783))	52,999	24,358
Other fundraising costs	351	435
Publicity	2,281	1,726
Investment management costs & finance charges	9,731	8,661
Bad debt write-off	-	360
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	95,743	65,725
	<hr/>	<hr/>

Membership Stewardship (previously Membership Administration) relates to the Membership Secretary and the time spent by other staff looking after BSBI members and income received from them.

BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (continued)

For the year ended 31 March 2022

6. EXPENDITURE ON CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES	2022	2021
	£	£
Botanical Data Interpretation and Access		
Project staff costs (Restricted £16,000 (2021 £15,000))	178,942	180,193
Project staff overhead costs	9,867	9,479
Project direct costs	-	463
Grant direct costs (Restricted £NIL (2021 £3,495))	26,138	14,252
Grants awarded for scientific work (Restricted £400 (2021 £400))	2,894	2,900
Support staff costs and expenses (Restricted £NIL (2021 £8,762))	<u>40,932</u>	<u>34,995</u>
	<u>258,773</u>	<u>242,282</u>
Botanical Conferences, Courses and Education		
Conferences and courses	1,139	2,194
Grants awarded for training and education	<u>(1,897)</u>	<u>5,361</u>
	<u>(758)</u>	<u>7,555</u>
Botanical Publications and Website		
<i>BSBI News</i> and other similar publications	35,361	29,587
Cost of publication sales	19,123	16,551
Grants awarded for botanical publications	2,250	-
Plant data management and website staff costs	<u>23,470</u>	<u>23,606</u>
	<u>80,204</u>	<u>69,744</u>
Governance costs		
Strategy Implementation Costs	8,987	-
Trustee indemnity insurance	975	1,010
Governance staff costs and expenses	41,606	19,070
Independent Examination	2,250	2,000
Payroll, HR and accounting support services	6,109	6,650
Committee costs and expenses	1,147	472
Increase / (decrease) in accrued holiday pay	(166)	2,525
Recruitment, other governance costs & expenses	<u>5,958</u>	<u>4,866</u>
	<u>66,866</u>	<u>36,593</u>
Total (Restricted £16,400 (2021 £27,657))	<u>405,085</u>	<u>356,174</u>

The Society makes three types of grants, each after due consideration by different committees. (1) Grants for scientific or research work with potentially publishable results are normally up to £1,000. (2) Grants for training and education are normally up to £250 and are given towards relevant and appropriate third-party courses and, occasionally, grants of up to £1,000 per annum are given for plant study or to support graduates studying for higher degrees in subjects particularly close to the Society's objects. (3) Grants for botanical publications, normally up to £1,000 for county Floras written by members.

In total, 19 individuals (2021: 20) were awarded grants in the year and the total value of grants disbursed in the year was £3,247 (2021: £8,261), which were awarded on the basis of applications made by individuals as described above.

Honorary officer costs are expenses of the President, Honorary General Secretary, Honorary Treasurer and Company Secretary. Costs of other Board members are included in committee expenses. Expenses reimbursed to Board members are disclosed in note 7 on Related Party Transactions.

BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (continued)

For the year ended 31 March 2022

7. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

Neither the Society's President nor Trustees received remuneration for their services or fees for professional work commissioned by the Society.

Many individuals elect not to claim all amounts due to them under the Society's policies and the total annual amount, although unquantified, is considered to be similar to the amount actually disbursed. Other than in exceptional circumstances, these individuals waive the right to claim expenses for meetings and events attended where an element of personal benefit arises.

The following transactions took place during the year:

Amounts totalling £6,147 (2021 - £2,300) were reimbursed to 6 (2021 - 3) individuals who made expense claims for reimbursement of out-of-pocket travel, subsistence and other costs. Of these amounts, four Trustees (2021 - One) were reimbursed £610 (2021 - £124).

Dr CM Cheffings, Trustee, is employed as Ecosystem Analysis Team Leader by Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC). During the year, BSBI received contract income of £20,038 (2021 - £19,701) from JNCC under its National Plant Monitoring Scheme (NPMS) contract.

Dr S Knapp, Trustee, is employed as Head of the Algae, Fungi and Plants Division by The Natural History Museum (NHM). Dr S Knapp is also President and Chair of the Linnean Society where during the year BSBI paid £83 (2021 - £189) for the hire of meeting rooms.

Dr M Dean, Trustee from 21 Nov 2020, was an Associate Tutor at Edge Hill University (EHU) until August 2021. BSBI provides EHU with access to its DDb in exchange for EHU resources such as e-journals.

Employees Ms JC Hanmer, (Chief Executive from 6 April 2021), Ms JA Houldsworth (Head of Operations until 22 January 2021) and Dr KJ Walker (Head of Science), all received remuneration during the year earned in their respective roles.

Dr KJ Walker's partner, Ms C Pinches, is employed as Principal Scientific Analyst, by Natural England (NE) the Government's Advisor for the natural environment. During the year, BSBI received £49,073 from NE (2021 - £74,810) for the collection, verification & sharing of vascular plant data and other work in England. Also, Dr Walker is a Fellow of UKCEH, through which he is able to use facilities at UKCEH Wallingford in order to facilitate research. BSBI reported income of £9,000 (2021 - £4,500) from UKCEH during the year under a three-year contract to deliver information re non-native plant species.

BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (continued)

For the year ended 31 March 2022

8. STAFF COSTS	2022	2021
	£	£
Salaries	309,392	262,077
Social Security costs	28,211	21,971
Pension costs	15,120	12,894
Increase / (decrease) in accrued holiday pay	(166)	2,525
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total staff costs	352,557	299,467
	<hr/>	<hr/>

No employee earned in excess of an annual equivalent of £60,000 during the year (2021: nil).

The average number of employees during the year was 10 (2021: 8). At the reporting date there were 10 employees (2021: 9) of which, one (2021: two) resident in Republic of Ireland.

The Trustees consider two members of staff to be key management personnel; the Chief Executive (2021: Head of Operations) and Head of Science. Their combined gross salaries, social security costs and employer's pension contributions constituted 32% (2021: 30%) of the totals above.

The Society fulfils its obligations under the Pension Act 2008 by offering a workplace pension into which eligible employees are automatically enrolled and contributions are paid at or above the required rate set by the Pensions Regulator.

No taxable employee benefits were paid during the year (2021 - £NIL).

BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (continued)

For the year ended 31 March 2022

9. INVESTMENTS	2022	2021
	£	£
At Market Value		
At the beginning of the year	818,355	668,160
Investment income retained	17,887	21,142
Investment management charges deducted	(8,032)	(7,190)
Transfers to bank current account	(100,000)	(70,000)
Realised (loss)/gain in the year	66,618	66,293
Unrealised (loss)/gain in the year	(43,353)	139,950
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Market value at the end of the year	751,475	818,355
	<hr/>	<hr/>
At Original Cost	617,013	640,319
	<hr/>	<hr/>

The original cost is the cost of the individual investments when first acquired. The investments are managed on a discretionary basis by the Society's investment managers. The investment objective is to generate an income and growth total return of inflation plus 2% per annum over the long term, after expenses. The investments are diversified as follows:

Equities - UK	23.6%	25.6%
Equities - Overseas	43.0%	39.5%
Bonds	9.3%	7.7%
Global Investments	6.8%	8.4%
Property	4.4%	5.0%
Private Equity	3.4%	3.8%
Other	6.3%	7.2%
Cash	3.2%	2.8%
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	100.0%	100.0%
	<hr/>	<hr/>

10. STOCKS AND WORK IN PROGRESS

Botanical publications	23,681	23,902
	<hr/>	<hr/>

Stocks of botanical publications are held by the Society's sales agent, Summerfield Books (2007) Ltd. Provision is made for slow-moving stocks; £4,782 (2021: £4,025). Sales proceeds are shown in note 3.

11. DEBTORS

Debtors	16,775	27,393
Accrued income	56,110	46,744
Prepayments	5,262	5,433
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total debtors	78,147	79,570
	<hr/>	<hr/>

BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (continued)

For the year ended 31 March 2022

12. CREDITORS

	2022	2021
	£	£
Amounts falling due within one year		
Creditors	12,103	3,841
Taxation and social security	21,111	25,991
Pensions	3,624	2,441
Holiday pay accrual	8,808	8,974
Other accrued expenses	13,648	17,881
Deferred income	132,322	105,155
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total creditors	191,616	164,283
	<hr/>	<hr/>

Deferred income of £78,275 (2021: £73,637) relates to subscriptions received for the calendar year 2022 therefore 75% of such annual subscriptions relating to the remaining nine months of the calendar year after the balance sheet date are deferred. Deferred income also arises in a similar way from grant, contract or publication income and from advance bookings for field meetings and conferences. £165,767 (2021: £127,485) was added during the year to the £105,155 (2021: £79,867) deferred income balance brought forward and £138,600 (2021: £102,196) was released from it, leaving £132,322 (2021: £105,155) carried forward at year end.

13. RESTRICTED FUNDS

	Presidents' Awards	Welsh Flora	Scottish Officer	Heritage Funds	Total
	£	£	£	£	£
At 1 April 2020	2,743	1,626	-	8,060	12,429
Transfer from General Fund	-	-	-	(2,780)	(2,780)
Investment gains / (losses)	683	405	-	-	1,088
Income	-	-	15,000	14,760	29,760
Expenditure on charitable activities	(400)	-	(15,000)	(20,040)	(35,440)
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
At 31 March 2021	3,026	2,031	-	-	5,057
Investment gains / (losses)	70	47	-	-	117
Income	54	36	16,000	-	16,090
Expenditure on charitable activities	(400)	-	(16,000)	-	(16,400)
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
At 31 March 2022	2,750	2,114	-	-	4,684
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

The Funds share in investment gains and losses only if permitted under the terms of the grant. The Funds are held as shown in note 15.

The Presidents' Award Fund is an expendable fund to provide for an annual award of £400 made to individual(s) by the Presidents of BSBI and the Wild Flower Society for outstanding contributions to botany. The 2021 Award of £400 was made to Dr James Merryweather for his book *Britain's Ferns*.

BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (continued)

For the year ended 31 March 2022

13. RESTRICTED FUNDS (continued)

The Welsh Flora Fund provides grants towards botanical publications relating to North Wales. One funding application was received during the year which was later withdrawn. There were no disbursements (2021: £nil).

The Scottish Officer Fund receives income which has been donated specifically towards the employment costs of the Scottish Officer. The remainder of the Scottish Officer's costs have been met by grant funding.

The Heritage Funds represented two grants from The National Lottery Heritage Fund:

- (1) A grant of £60,000 awarded in October 2018 to fund the costs of a Strategic Review project. Following a transfer of £3k grant expenditure from the General Fund on completion of the work (also see note 14), the final £6k grant claim was made in July 2020 and the fund is now closed.
- (2) A grant of £8,800 awarded in August 2020 to fund the costs of staff time involved in planning and preparing Covid restriction compliant activity such as moving events online, holding safe field meetings. This work was carried out in Autumn/ Winter 2020 and this fund is now closed.

14. UNRESTRICTED FUNDS

	2022	2021
	£	£
General Fund		
At the beginning of the year	880,471	713,137
Transfer of costs to Restricted Funds	-	2,780
Incoming resources	441,202	366,594
Resources expended	(437,922)	(382,286)
Investment (losses)/gains	20,357	180,246
Designated to Strategic Development Fund	(100,000)	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
At the end of the year	804,108	880,471
	<hr/>	<hr/>

The purpose of the General Fund is to provide working capital for the Society's activities and to provide a buffer against fluctuations in income.

	2022	2021
	£	£
Strategic Development Fund		
At the beginning of the year	120,736	100,000
Resources expended	(46,506)	(4,173)
Investment Income	2,146	-
Investment (losses)/gains	2,791	24,909
Designated from General Fund	100,000	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
At the end of the year	179,167	120,736
	<hr/>	<hr/>

The purpose of the Strategic Development Fund is to meet expenditure incurred in delivering BSBI's Strategy which will place BSBI on a more financially sustainable footing. The Funds are held as shown in note 15.

BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (continued)

For the year ended 31 March 2022

15. ALLOCATION OF FUNDS

	Investments	Other Net	Total
	£	Assets	£
		£	
As at 31 March 2022			
Restricted Income Funds			
Presidents' Award Fund	2,750	-	2,750
Welsh Flora Fund	2,114	-	2,114
Scottish Officer Fund	-	-	-
Unrestricted Income Funds			
General Fund	567,444	236,664	804,108
Strategic Development Fund	179,167	-	179,167
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	751,475	236,664	988,139
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
As at 31 March 2021			
Restricted Income Funds			
Presidents' Award Fund	3,026	-	3,026
Welsh Flora Fund	2,031	-	2,031
Scottish Officer Fund	-	-	-
Unrestricted Income Funds			
General Fund	692,562	187,909	880,471
Strategic Development Fund	120,736	-	120,736
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	818,355	187,909	1,006,264
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

16. COMMITMENTS

As at 31 March 2022, The Society had approved 30 training and research grants totalling £11,485 (2021: 36 grants, £11,403). Grants are normally paid after the completion of the training course or research. The commitment at 31 March 2022 represents grants awarded in Spring 2022. Grants awarded before this have either been paid or are accrued at year end.

As at 31 March 2022, BSBI is committed to two three-year term office leases expiring in 2022 & 2023 for the Head of Science and BSBI archives. The total non-cancellable commitment under these leases is £2,417 (2021: £5,667).

In the normal course of business, other agreements exist with suppliers, none of which is onerous.

BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (continued)

For the year ended 31 March 2022

17. RECONCILIATION OF NET INCOME / (EXPENDITURE) TO NET CASH FLOW USED IN OPERATING ACTIVITIES

	2022 £	2021 £
Net income / (expenditure) for the year	(18,125)	180,698
Adjustments for:		
Losses / (gains) on investments	(23,265)	(206,243)
Dividends and interest from investments and deposits	(17,910)	(21,182)
Investment management charges	8,032	7,190
(Increase) / decrease in stocks	221	2,619
(Increase) / decrease in debtors	1,423	(2,385)
Increase / (decrease) in creditors	27,333	36,385
	-----	-----
Net Cash inflow/(outflow) generated by/ (used in) operating activities	(22,291)	(2,918)
	-----	-----

18. COVID

As explained in the Annual Report, the Covid pandemic continued to have a significant impact during the year on individuals, businesses and organisations worldwide, including BSBI. We know this triggered all manner of challenges from illness, bereavement, job insecurity, money worries and more.

For BSBI, the human impact on the safety of staff, members and others remained the top priority. As the pandemic unfolded, all field meetings and face to face events were cancelled in favour of online activities. BSBI Trustees closely monitored the situation, issued advice on changes throughout the pandemic and took care to ensure that all Government guidance, including social distancing and other Covid prevention measures, as well as safe working practices for fieldwork, were always followed.

Like most other organisations, BSBI was impacted financially by Covid, although, thanks to the diligence, support and flexibility of Trustees, employees, Committees & volunteers, the impact was mitigated in many ways, whether it be through offering online botanical events, grant funding applications or other measures. We are pleased that it was not necessary to place any employees on Government furlough.

The governance changes made at the November 2020 AGM to update BSBI's Articles of Association to allow the holding of voting at meetings held digitally has since proved invaluable in allowing activities to continue despite Covid restrictions and fortuitously then bringing important longer-term benefits; cost savings, a reduction in BSBI's carbon footprint and increased inclusiveness of particular benefit to those unable to travel to attend meetings through geographical distance, affordability or health reasons. Even so, everyone in BSBI was of course delighted when face to face activities were eventually resumed, allowing learning opportunities to resume and relationships rekindled.

There have been other silver linings of Covid too. We reported here last year an emerging sense the impact of Covid was leading the UK towards a new-found public awareness and appreciation for the natural world and this has once again been borne out by membership metrics which we talked about earlier in this report. Growth again went beyond our expectations: by +9% (2021: +9%) in the year to March 2022. Also, botanical handbooks have sold well: +18% more sold in the year (2021: +8%), probably building on interests sparked by the greater leisure time many people gained during the pandemic.

BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (continued)

For the year ended 31 March 2022

18. COVID (continued)

A recovery thankfully followed the significant fall in market value of BSBI's investments experienced in Spring 2020, however volatility remained a feature of the year under review; as the world economy found its feet post-Covid, it was struck again, this time by the impact of the disturbing Russia-Ukraine war and its far-reaching impact continues to be felt, especially through oil and other materials' price inflation.

The pandemic has inevitably brought with it a new, challenging, fundraising landscape and BSBI's Fundraising Manager, appointed in Spring 2021, is carefully navigating her way through this to deliver BSBI's *Income Diversification Strategy 2020-2023*, taking steps closer to delivering the Sustainable Business Model critical to BSBI's success and resilience.

Covid has reshaped BSBI in ways we could not have anticipated, accelerating digital capabilities for example, and it has emerged stronger than before and in great shape to face the future.

Overall, the Board feels it took appropriate measures to carefully navigate through the pandemic and considers that despite the severe disruption of its charitable and scientific activities during the last two years, BSBI remains a going concern and no adjustments have been made to the figures in these financial statements in respect of events since the balance sheet date.

The BSBI Board and Chief Executive remain confident of its ability to deliver *BSBI's Strategic Plan 2021-2024* and look forward to the future.