



BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND

ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

**For the Year Ended
31 March 2025**

**Registered Charity
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BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND

ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

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The Board of Trustees presents its Annual Report together with the Accounts of the Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland (BSBI, the Society, the Charity) for the year ended 31 March 2025. 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 44-46 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 Strategy

Objectives

The objectives 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.

Strategy

During the period under review, various measures were taken to facilitate the meeting of these objectives, to complete the delivery of the *BSBI Strategic Plan 2021-2024* and to begin the implementation of the *BSBI Strategic Plan 2024-2027*

Vision: A world where wild plants thrive and are valued and understood

Purpose: To advance the understanding and appreciation of wild plants and support their conservation in Britain and Ireland

Goals:

1. Inspire, build & support a diverse community of botanists to sustain & develop the skill base
2. Provide high quality, impartial data and interpretation for research and to help address key environmental issues such as biodiversity loss and climate change
3. Raise the profile of plants and botany so that wild plants are better understood and more highly valued

Foundations:

1. Motivated, skilled people
2. Strong relationships
3. Strong governance
4. Effective data management
5. Sustainable business model

Values: A love of plants, Intrepid, Inclusive, Inquisitive

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The Strategic Plans have helped 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 and address key environmental issues, such as climate change and biodiversity loss.

The next section of this report, Activities, Achievements & Performance, sets out the steps taken under the leadership of the Society's Chief Executive, Julia Hanmer, to deliver BSBI's three Strategic Goals during the period under review.

2. Activities, Achievements and Performance

Goals

Goal 1: Build a diverse community of botanists to sustain and develop the skill base

The Society, which traces its origins to 1836, is now 189 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 period under review saw one of the fullest programmes of field meetings and both indoor and online events ever offered by the Society, aimed at botanists of all skill levels across Britain and Ireland. This programme introduces newcomers to the Society, fosters the mentoring of individuals' field identification skills, encourages existing members to work together and helps to build a diverse community of botanists to sustain and develop the skill base. Wherever possible, talks given at online and in-person events were recorded and uploaded to the BSBI YouTube channel; by the end of March 2025, the channel had attracted almost 5,000 subscribers and many of the webinars had been viewed thousands of times.

Events across Britain and Ireland

In total, 62 national field meetings or indoor events were held during the period under review; these included field meetings aimed particularly at beginner botanists; one-day general meetings at locations across Britain and Ireland: from the Isle of Wight to Banffshire and from Connemara to North Norfolk; and residential recording weeks in Carmarthenshire and the Isle of Tíre.

Events for intrepid botanists were held in a wide range of habitats and locations: on sand dunes on Jersey and Cos. Waterford and Wexford; along coast paths in northeast Yorkshire; on grasslands in Co. Limerick; scree slopes in Brecknockshire; urban sites in the Greater London area; in Westmorland's moors and the fens of Cos. Laois and Offaly. Several meetings were held jointly with partners such as the Wild Flower Society, National Trust for Scotland, Plantlife, British Bryological Society, Surrey Wildlife Trust and London Natural History Society. Workshops and training meetings were targeted at all skill levels, from beginner to improver, with specialist meetings aimed at the most experienced botanists; and conferences/ weekend events were held in England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales aimed at bringing 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.

The Irish Spring Conference took place at the National Botanic Garden of Ireland at Glasnevin in Dublin and featured six talks and three workshops, while the Irish Autumn Meeting at Lough Neagh Discovery Centre, Co. Armagh, featured nine talks and three workshops; each event attracted 80-90 participants. A residential Recording Meeting was held in Shrewsbury in April 2024, aimed at both beginner and more seasoned recorders.

The Annual Summer Meeting was held on Guernsey over a long weekend in late May 2024; it attracted 21 participants who enjoyed various daytime excursions and evening talks. The residential Wales Annual Meeting and AGM took place at University of Swansea ~~was held~~ in July 2024, also over a long weekend,

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and attracted 55 attendees; the theme was brownfield and coal spoil habitats, with excursions to a selection of post-industrial sites, evening talks and workshops on forget-me-nots and willow-herbs.

The Scottish Botanists' Conference, held at Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh in November 2024, attracted 220 visitors (a record number) who enjoyed ten talks, eight workshops, flash talks from student researchers and 42 exhibits. The talks were recorded and had attracted 984 views by 31st March 2025.

The British and Irish Botanical Conference was held at the Natural History Museum, London, in November 2024; demand was unprecedented, with over 300 advance bookings - many more than could be accommodated at this prestigious venue – so, sadly, we were unable to issue tickets to some people who wanted to attend. The event featured ten talks, ten flash talks, two herbarium workshops and two behind-the-scenes herbarium tours (one of the Sloane Herbarium and one of the British & Irish Collection). There were 42 exhibits (a record number) with posters on subjects such as Securing the future of Scarce Tufted-sedge in the UK, plant pathogens of Ireland and neophytes in London, and stalls from partner organisations such as the Field Studies Council and the Natural History Museum's Centre for UK Nature. Speakers included Dr Trevor Dines, Phoebe O'Brien and Dr Stuart Desjardins, with the keynote speech given by Dr Sandy Knapp. The talks were recorded and uploaded to the BSBI YouTube channel, where they had attracted a total of 2,921 views by the end of March 2025.

The 2024 Annual General Meeting was held online as a separate event, to allow participation from members who did not wish to, or were unable to, travel to London but still wished to hear about the Society's achievements over the previous year and vote on the nominations for (re-)election to the Board of Trustees and for the nomination of Dr Brenda Harold for Honorary Membership. The AGM was preceded by two talks, one from the recipient of the 2023 Award for Outstanding Contribution to British and Irish Botany and one on the urban flora of Glasgow.

Activities to help build a diverse community of botanists continued into the winter months. The Society's annual New Year Plant Hunt (NYPH) was held over four days between 29 December 2024 and 1 January 2025. Now in its fourteenth year, this popular citizen science event provided plant-lovers at all skill levels with an opportunity to try out botanical recording by looking for wild and naturalised plants in bloom at midwinter. Building on the popularity of two digital spotter sheets (a Top Ten and a Top Twenty most frequent species) introduced for the first time at the January 2024 NYPH, the selection was expanded to provide two spotter sheets for each of the countries or regions across the Society's geography. To provide support for the plant-hunters, especially those taking part for the first time, the new spotter sheets were augmented by a pre-registration facility; increased pre-publicity; regular email updates and reminders for registrants; a dedicated support team providing encouragement and helping with identification; and guidance on how to take plant photographs which, once uploaded via the NYPH recording app, would maximise the likelihood of accurate identification. Around 3,000 people took part over the four days and submitted a total of almost 25,000 records (a record number) of 647 taxa in bloom, making the NYPH both a valuable engagement/ outreach activity and a means of collecting equally valuable data on phenology (plant flowering times), thus feeding into BSBI's three Strategic Goals of building a botanical community and gaining a better understanding of how wild plants in Britain and Ireland are responding to a changing climate.

This programme of in-person national events was augmented by local field meetings organised by local botany groups, and by a selection of webinars and other online training events. A series of three online winter talks attracted a total 1,608 attendees; talks were recorded, and the videos had been viewed 1,608 times by the end of March 2025. The Committee for England held their Annual Meeting online in February 2025 with four talks which were recorded and had attracted 1,045 views by 31st March 2025.

Focus on training

Thanks to follow-on funding from the Irish National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS) for a three-year Targeted Aquatic Plant Project, BSBI was able to offer a series of field-based workshops across Ireland, alongside webinars and other online training events which reached hundreds of people (see the Table below). The Botanical Skills Ladder, which shows people how to self-assess their botanical skill level

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and flags the professional and voluntary opportunities available at each level on the Ladder, and also the accompanying leaflet, *So You Want To Know Your Plants*, which signposts future field botanists towards the resources and activities to help them climb the Skills Ladder, were both updated during the year. Also, as part of the action plan for improving BSBI's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) provision, the latter was also made available in Welsh, as was the *BSBI Code of Conduct*, which lists scheduled/ protected plants in Britain and Ireland and provides guidance on how to collect, photograph and enjoy wild plants with conservation in mind.

Plant group(s)	Training Events 2024/25					
	Target area	Funded/ charged	No.	In-person or online?	Participants on the day	YouTube views as of 31 March 25
Ferns	Britain & Ireland	£5	1	O	Online link only	1.3K
Aquatic plants: field training events	Ireland	Free to attend/ funded by NPWS	4	IP	72	n/a
Composites	Inverness	£40 (£20 BSBI members/ students) including Identification booklet	1	IP	20	n/a
Ferns for Beginners	Dunbartonshire, Scotland	£40 (£20 BSBI members/ students) including Identification booklet	1	IP	10	n/a
Grassland plants	Limerick, Ireland	Free	1	IP	20	n/a
Grass ID	Lanarkshire & Perthshire, Scotland	£40 (£20 BSBI members/ students) including Identification booklet	2	IP	4/15	n/a
Lady's-mantles	Perthshire	Free	1	IP	12	n/a
Plant families	Various locations across Scotland	£40 (£20 BSBI members/ students) including Identification booklet	3	IP	10/7/4	n/a
Sedges	Westmorland, England	Free	1	IP	14	n/a
Sedges & Rushes	Dumfriesshire	Free	1	IP	14	n/a
Brambles	Northern Ireland	Free to attend/ funded by DAERA	1	O	179	456
Dryopteris	Northern Ireland	Free to attend/ funded by DAERA	1	O	169	460
Getting started with Cotoneasters	Northern Ireland	Free to attend/ funded by DAERA	!	O	321	742

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Getting Started with Flower Anatomy	Northern Ireland	Free to attend/ funded by DAERA	1	O	424	870
Getting Started with Plant and Leaf Anatomy	Northern Ireland	Free to attend/ funded by DAERA	1	O	478	1.2K
Grasses & grassland habitats	Northern Ireland	Free to attend/ funded by DAERA	1	O	500	877
Grasses, Sedges & Rushes for absolute beginners	Northern Ireland	Free to attend/ funded by DAERA	1	O	500	1.4K
Horsetails	Northern Ireland	Free to attend/ funded by DAERA	1	O	213	585
Lepidoptera and plants	Northern Ireland	Free to attend/ funded by DAERA	1	O	313	546

By combining in-person and digital activities, BSBI has grown its programme of training events and expanded its ability 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.

The Society's grants programme, offering a range of grants from Training Grants aimed at beginners and improvers, through Plant Study Grants and Science & Research Grants aimed at undergraduate and post-graduate researchers, also helped to develop the skills base and support research into the British and Irish flora. Each recipient of a BSBI grant is invited to write a short report for publication on the BSBI website, to attend a national event such as the British & Irish Botanical Conference or the Scottish Botanists' Conference and to offer a poster and/or a flash talk, about the course they were able to attend, or the research they were able to carry out, thanks to a BSBI grant. This allows members attending these Conferences to hear more about the work their subscriptions help to support. Where appropriate, grant recipients are also encouraged to publish the results of their research in a BSBI periodical.

	Grants			
	2025 Applications	2025 Awards	2024 Applications	2024 Awards
Training Grant	81	37	66	32
Plant Study Grant	6	4	2	2
Science & Research Grant	5	4	4	3
Total	92	45	72	37

FISC and Identiplant

Field Identification Skills Certificate (FISC) tests, the industry standard for assessing field plant identification skills, and Identiplant, the online tutor-led plant ID course, were brought in-house in 2023, under the leadership of BSBI's dedicated Training Coordinator, Dr Chantal Helm.

FISC

In 2024, FISC expanded from nine FISC Providers in 2023 to 12 Providers, including Wildlife Trusts, ecological consultancies, the Field Studies Council and Natural England. 29 FISCs were run across England in 2024, significantly expanding the geographical spread. A record number of 513 candidates undertook a FISC in 2024, bringing the total number of people with a FISC to over 2000 people. FISCs have firmly established themselves as the industry standard in assessing field botanical identification skills with many employers listing a FISC as a desirable or essential criterion in job specifications. BSBI also published an article on FISCs in the CIEEM *In Practice* magazine in September 2024, highlighting the progress that has been made in recognising the importance of an objective and standardised assessment for plant identification skills.

The BSBI continues to ensure that recruitment and training of Assessors and the Quality Assurance process are as robust and transparent as possible to ensure standardisation across all FISC Providers. These processes also ensure that FISC continues to be the industry leading mechanism allowing individuals to demonstrate their field botanical ID skills. A FISC Development Working Group provided valuable support and, input into standards and quality assurance, while working to improve the FISC protocols and guidance for Assessors as well as providing mentorship to new Assessors..

During January to March 2025, preparations were made to pilot the first FISC in the Republic of Ireland, planned for summer 2025.

Identiplant

Record numbers of students applied for the Identiplant course in 2024, but places could only be allocated to 292 students across 66 Tutors. Unfortunately, 170 students could not be offered a place, resulting in efforts to explore an alternative option that could be self-led for 2025, as well as an expanded recruitment drive to recruit more tutors for 2025. In 2024, Identiplant was delivered for the first time via BSBI's in-house bespoke learning platform called Capsella which was developed by BSBI Data Support Officer Dr James Drever and received excellent feedback from both students and tutors. A record completion rate was achieved at the end of the course with one student delivering a talk at the British & Irish Botanical Conference on how Identiplant kickstarted their career in botany. Over 2000 students have taken the Identiplant course to date. The Identiplant Management Team has played a vital role in the work to update and improve course content, mentoring new tutors and supporting the mid-season quality assurance process.

After successfully recruiting additional tutors to reach a record number of 92 tutors, BSBI was able to substantially increase the number of places on the Identiplant course starting in February 2025 to 412. Only eight people remained on the waiting list, and they joined a trial of the new Identiplant Foundations self-led course hosted on Capsella. This course was originally envisaged as a precursor to Identiplant but can also be a stand-alone beginner course for those at Level 1 or 2 of the Botanical Skills Ladder and with limited time to undertake field work and submit written work. The Identiplant course benefitted from the introduction of a number of elements aimed at enriching the course content, including optional quizzes, webinars and several new videos.



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These initiatives, alongside the selection of training events outlined above, helped build the in-house training offering as a complement to the external training courses which have long been listed on the BSBI website. An in-person 'Training for Trainers' event was held at Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE) in October 2024 to support the growing number of trainers needed to deliver BSBI's training offering; a video from this event had attracted more than 100 views by the end of March 2025.

Thanks to funding from DAERA and the Carrier Bag Levy/ Environment Fund <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/carrier-bag-levy>, a targeted programme of training and engagement in Northern Ireland could be offered. In 2024–25, the BSBI Northern Ireland Botanical Skills and Evidence Project engaged more than 7,000 participants through training, fieldwork and online events; it also strengthened key partnerships with landowners and NGOs, boosted participation in the National Plant Monitoring Scheme (see below), improved data upload, provided targeted scientific advice to DAERA and helped to ensure better access to plant data to support nature recovery in Northern Ireland. Details of the ten webinars offered under the banner of the BSBI Northern Ireland Botanical Skills and Evidence Project can be found in the Table above.

Goal 2: Provide high quality, impartial data and interpretation for research and to help address biodiversity loss and climate change

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 Vice-County Recorders. The Society and its members have always engaged in the accurate recording of plant distributional data; during the period under review, botanical surveys, recording activities and partnership initiatives continued to 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. BSBI's recording activities also support the development and implementation of conservation and land management policy and practice to address key environmental issues such as biodiversity loss and climate change. The Society has continued to build on its longstanding reputation, boosted by the publication in 2023 of a third plant distribution atlas, for providing a recognised evidence base which is increasingly relied on by scientific researchers and conservation practitioners.

In March 2024, the BSBI *Science Strategy 2024-2029* was published; its three Goals are to:

1. Provide high-quality evidence on the British and Irish flora, including its taxonomy, biogeography and ecology
2. Provide high-quality evidence on the state of our flora and how it is responding to environmental and human drivers
3. Provide impartial scientific advice to ensure BSBI data have impact in supporting nature recovery.

During the period under review, the BSBI Science Team contributed to various high-profile partnerships and, guided by the new Science Strategy, worked with BSBI committees and members to develop a range of new recording activities for BSBI members and supporters. The BSBI Recording App was launched and is now widely and routinely used by recorders; feedback has been very positive, and the next phase will focus on the development of a 'desktop' version which will provide a quick and reliable way of entering records from record cards. Members' access to the BSBI Distribution Database (the DDb) was also rolled out.

GB Red List

In partnership with, and thanks to funding from, Natural England, BSBI's Science Team has been working with the UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology (UKCEH) to review and update the threat status list for vascular plants, using the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) criteria. During the period under review, BSBI coordinated a major revision to the GB Red List for vascular plants,

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updating the previous List (Cheffings & Farrell, 2005) which appeared after publication of the second plant distribution Atlas and the availability of around 30 million additional validated records. This new version includes a thorough assessment of 1,719 native and archaeophyte taxa, including many that had not been assessed before. It also includes appendices that list threat assessments for all native *Hieracium* and *Taraxcum* taxa, as well as threat assessments for segregates within *Limonium binervosum* agg. and *Dryopteris affinis* agg., and taxa that have not been assessed but are instead included on the Waiting and Parking Lists. The results, which are due to be published as a special issue of *British & Irish Botany* in late summer 2025, will provide the basis for plant conservation for decades to come, helping organisations to prioritise and target conservation actions.

Botanical Heatmaps

BSBI continued to build on the successful launch in 2022 of botanical value maps and 'heatmaps' for England, based on the plant records held in the BSBI Distribution Database (DDb) and developed in partnership with Natural England. The heatmaps are an evidence-based tool which use BSBI data to target positive conservation measures and ensure that land use decisions, such as tree planting and agriculture, cause no harm to those species-rich open habitats, such as peatlands, that are so important for biodiversity and carbon storage. Further work took place in 2024-25 to refine the heatmaps for England, notably to make better use of BSBI tetrad records in areas where monad data were lacking and to improve the benchmarking of monads; the heatmaps are now being used by Natural England and Forestry Commission staff to guide tree-planting and update Habitat Inventories. A feasibility study for equivalent maps for the Republic of Ireland was also completed, while in Scotland a scoping study is underway for NatureScot.

Improving dataflows

During 2024-2025 the data team undertook a range of work to improve data flows both to and from the BSBI Plant Distribution Database (the DDb), which is one of the world's largest databases of biological records. Most notably this included the further development and testing of the BSBI's new Recording App, which is now being used routinely by many recorders in the field, resulting in almost 195,000 new records being submitted during the period under review, swelling the total number of records held to 60 million. This work also included a large transfer of plant records from iRecord and iNaturalist to the DDb, with plans now in place for more regular transfers going forwards; updating the UK Species Inventory (UKSI) and increasing the flow of BSBI data from BSBI to the NBN Atlas, notably in England as a result of the Natural England funded project – 36 of the 58 Vice-County Recorders in England are now sharing data to the NBN, with more than 22 million records already added.

Documentation and training

Through the course of 2024-25, the documentation provided at BSBI's Documentation website, www.docs.bsbi.org, has expanded considerably, making this the 'one-stop shop' for guidance and training materials on recording, data management and data use. New sections were added for the BSBI Recording App, and for managing records in the DDb from iRecord and from the App. During the period under review, the Documentation website attracted 28,000 pageviews from 10,200 users. Ten training sessions were delivered (two in person, eight online) covering introductions to the DDb and the Recording App and managing records in the DDb from the App. Bi-annual online sessions for the new Vice-County Recorders have been put in place. Face-to-face training on the DDb and the BSBI Recording App was delivered at the Recorders' Meeting, the Scottish Botanists' Conference and the Irish Spring Conference.

Data requests and data sharing

The BSBI Data Team processed 23 external requests for data extracts during the period under review; four new data sharing agreements and/ or annual licences were established in 2024-25, bringing the total to 21 organisations benefiting from access to BSBI data. BSBI data were also made available provided for a variety of conservation projects, including Butterfly Conservation's research into the distribution of various butterfly and moth species in NI (by providing information on occurrence of foodplants). In turn, Butterfly Conservation provided an exhibit of their work in this area at the BSBI Ireland Autumn Conference.

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National Plant Monitoring Scheme

The Society also continued to be an active partner in the National Plant Monitoring Scheme (NPMS), which aims to better understand the health of plants and habitats across the UK. BSBI's role includes helping to promote the Scheme at internal and external events and on social media and encouraging members to adopt a square for monitoring and Vice-County Recorders to take on mentorship roles. Participation in Northern Ireland was boosted by the appointment of a new staff member under the banner of the BSBI Northern Ireland Botanical Skills and Evidence Project (see above).

Botanical recording at country and county level

BSBI now has a full complement of Country Officers, and a Countries Manager, to support the growing networks of Vice-County Recorders and local groups. New Vice-County Recorders were appointed during the period under review, swelling the network to 229 and working alongside 94 expert taxonomic referees to provide the essential volunteer support which underpins all the Society's activities and achievements. A growing number of vice-counties opted for a team approach, rather than having just one person covering the whole vice-county; by the end of March 2025, there were 73 Vice-County Recorder teams, compared to 78 with a solo Vice-County Recorder, and twelve new iRecord verifiers were added, bringing the overall total to 119.

Supported by the Country Officers, Vice-County Recorders and taxonomic experts, BSBI members and supporters continued to contribute to the final recording periods of several targeted country-level recording projects to refind plant species of national, regional or local conservation importance which have not been recorded in recent decades: the Lost Rarities in England initiative; Rare Plant Project Ireland; and the Scottish Hectad Rare Plant Project.

In Scotland, funding from NatureScot facilitated work on the development of a protocol for structured monitoring to provide information on changes to the flora of Scottish mountains, while a proposal from the National Trust for Scotland and Plantlife Scotland led to BSBI contributing to the development of a Mountain Plant Alliance, which brings interested parties together to share expertise and actions to help protect the flora and bryophytes of montane areas.

2024 saw the appointment of a Wales Officer to work on the two-year 'Priority Plants on SSSIs in Wales Project' funded by the Welsh Government's Nature Network Fund. Additional funding was sourced for the Wales Officer to provide more general support to Vice-County Recorders in Wales during the winter of 2024-25.

In England, the England Officer provided in-person and online support to Vice-County Recorders and local group leaders, and facilitated the publication of, for example, a Rare Plant Register for Surrey and an axiophyte list for London. In the Republic of Ireland, the Ireland Officer undertook three Rare Plants surveys and three clubmoss surveys, the latter to help inform Article 17 reporting by Ireland's National Parks & Wildlife Service and also facilitated a collaboration between BSBI and BirdWatch Ireland to survey plots within their reserves in the Shannon Callows.

BSBI members and supporters made several notable plant finds during the year under review. In Wales, these included *Ophioglossum azoricum* (Small Adder's-tongue) in Denbighshire, *Juncus capitatus* (Dwarf Rush) on Anglesey, *Matthiola sinuata* (Sea Stock) in Cardiganshire and *Equisetum x font-queri* (Great horsetail x Marsh horsetail) in Carmarthenshire; a new whitebeam *Aria wyensis* was also described from Monmouthshire and published in *British & Irish Botany*.

Four new taxa for Scotland were recorded in 2024-25: *Amelanchier alnifolia* and *Zinnia peruviana* from Midlothian, *Dactylorhiza viridis* x *Gymnadenia densiflora* from West Sutherland, and *Raphanus sativus* var. *oleiformis* from Moray.

In Ireland, *Dryopteris remota* (Scaly Buckler-fern) was found in Co. Clare – this is only the fourth record for the species in Ireland; *Ranunculus peltatus* (Pond Water-crowfoot) was recorded in West Mayo for

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the first time in over fifty years; and in Co. Wexford, *Geranium maderense* (Giant Herb-robert) and naturalised *Berberis julianae* (Chinese Barberry) were recorded for the first time in the county and *Avena barbata* (Slender Oat) was the first record for Ireland.

In England, several species were recorded for the first time in a vice-county; these included *Carex filiformis* (Downy-fruited Sedge) in Sussex, Bladderwort *Utricularia australis* in Wiltshire, *Himantoglossum hircinum* (Lizard Orchid) and *Valerianella eriocarpa* (Hairy-fruited Cornsalad) on the IoW and *Fumaria densiflora* (Dense Flowered Fumitory) in Northeast Yorkshire, while *Galium constrictum* (Slender Bedstraw), was re-found on Jersey for the first time since 1906. Finally, *Crepis praemorsa* (Leafless Hawk's-beard) was found on Tarn Moor, North Yorkshire: this is only the second record for Britain and western Europe.

During 2024, the BSBI Science staff, Country Officers and members of country committees worked together to develop ideas for recording activities to follow on from Plant Atlas 2020. These included further development of a method to record flowering phenology along fixed transects, building on the success of the New Year Plant Hunt; the methodology has been developed, and BSBI is now planning a trial phase with volunteers in the coming year, while also seeking to raise funding for an Engagement Officer role. An activity was also launched to help assess methods to monitor changes on mountain tops; and a range of recording activities began in Spring 2025 for recorders across Britain and Ireland to complete during routine recording: origin and habitats of non-natives, under-recorded species and monads, and targeted species for survey including a suite of seven species for beginners to record. Additionally, a new recording project for upland plants was launched in Ireland.

Goal 3: Disseminate information to drive a passion for plants

The Society's portfolio of publications and periodicals, its website and social media activity, and its outreach and training programmes all operate in order to complement and engage a growing membership base to contribute to the many research and recording projects outlined above, 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. To support the delivery of BSBI's Strategic Goals, especially Goal 3, work was undertaken to produce a Communications Strategy and Toolkit with a view to making them available in the summer of 2025.

Publications and periodicals

During the period under review, the Society's publications and periodicals portfolio continued to disseminate information to drive a passion for plants, to raise the profile of botany, and to sustain and develop the skill base.

Under the auspices of the BSBI Handbooks Editor, Dr Liz Kungu, supported by a small working group, work continued apace to bring new titles into the pipeline and augment the series of BSBI Handbooks for difficult plant groups. Handbook no. 25, *Brambles of Scotland*, was prepared for publication during the period under review – it was published in April 2025 – and Handbook no. 26, *Wild Roses of Great Britain and Ireland*, entered the final stages of editorial supervision, with publication expected before the end of 2025.

Many titles in the BSBI's catalogue of publications, including the entire series of BSBI Handbooks for difficult plant groups and a selection of county Floras, have been made available at a competitive price as PDF eBooks, thereby helping to drive sales to members and non-members alike while also raising the Society's profile as a publisher of essential botanical publications in both traditional and digital formats.

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The 2024 Presidents' Award, which is awarded annually by the Presidents of the Wild Flower Society and the BSBI, went to Paul Green for his *Flora of Wexford*. The presentation was made at the Wild Flower Society AGM. The *Flora of Wexford* was also made available as an eBook.

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. Twelve scientific papers were published in the sixth volume of *British & Irish Botany* under the editorship of Dr Stuart Desjardins, and the first issue of volume seven, which comprised six papers, appeared in March 2025.

The Society's membership magazine, *BSBI News*, continued to engage, inform and educate 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 were made freely available online; and a popular *News & Views* blog, all of which have helped the Society engage with the wider botanical community.

Membership

BSBI seeks to attract members of all ages and backgrounds by setting membership subscriptions at a level affordable to all, with further concessions for all students, regardless of age, in possession of a student card; for anyone under 25; and for longstanding members over 65. A BSBI Hardship Fund also exists to support existing members wishing to continue their association with the Society in the event of unforeseen financial difficulty. While calls on this Fund have been modest so far, it is reassuring that it can help many others in years to come.

The Society is delighted to report continued membership growth (+8% overall) across all geographical areas. The year under review saw excellent consolidation and retention of members, continuing the growth of the profile of the charity and the number of people supporting its aims. Membership benefits continue to be added and BSBI works to use membership subscription income to best achieve its strategic goals. The positive financial impact of this continued growth is described in the Financial Review section 4 below.

	Membership as at 31 March		
	2025	2024	% Change
UK, Isle of Man & Channel Islands	3,911	3,615	+8%
Ireland	433	384	+13%
Rest of World	56	57	-2%
Total	4,400	4,056	+8%

During the period under review, efforts were undertaken to broaden the range of services and resources available to BSBI members and to acknowledge their outstanding contributions. Five BSBI members, nominated by their fellow members for outstanding contributions to botany, received BSBI Awards under an initiative launched in 2022 by the BSBI Nominations, Awards and Governance Committee.

Faith Anstey, Patricia Lockwood and Wendy McCarthy all received awards recognising outstanding contributions in their local area, while Arthur Chater received the 'Outstanding Contribution to British and Irish Botany' Award for his service to the Society for over 70 years, including editing many of the early BSBI Handbooks, authoring more than 400 publications including two Floras, acting as one of BSBI's expert taxonomic referees (for sedges, *Carex* spp.) and serving on BSBI Council, Publications

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Committee and the Committee for Wales as well as being Vice-County Recorder for Cardiganshire for almost 40 years.

Access to the network of 94 expert taxonomic Referees for 185 difficult plant groups is one of the benefits of membership; Referees' contact details and guidance on collection of material are listed in the BSBI Yearbook or via a searchable table on the members-only area of the BSBI website, which also includes reports on BSBI Forums (see below); every scientific paper published in *New Journal of Botany* 2011-17; resources for Vice-County Recorders; information for members on subjects such as Database access, BSBI Handbooks and opportunities to claim discounts when purchasing selected botanical titles; digital copies of members-only periodicals such as *BSBI News* and the *Yearbook*, both of which can be accessed as pdfs or in browser via a screen reader; and details of the BSBI archive, stored in Harrogate, which holds physical copies of important BSBI publications. The online members' area helps support the increasing proportion of members opting for the digital subscription option; by the end of the period under review, it was pleasing to see that 4 out of 10 members had opted into this environmentally friendly delivery format.

Website

BSBI's comprehensive website, www.bsbi.org/, has been fundamental in making information about plant distribution and taxonomy freely available as a service to the botanical community. The website is updated regularly 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. A Working Group was set up in autumn 2024 to investigate the feasibility of developing a new website with increased functionality and greater accessibility, including the option for Vice-County Recorders to update their county pages. Following a positive response from BSBI trustees and the allocation of a small budget to hire a designer, migration work commenced early in 2025 with a view to launching a new and improved website before the end of 2025.

The current BSBI website offers much information on the Society's activities on a free-to-use basis, with more than 400 webpages and a separate digital archive of botanical publications. Resources such as these are helping to raise the Society's profile, clarify objectives and practices and disseminate information to drive a passion for plants, and have established 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 a total of 1,262,620 pageviews by 283,212 active 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 the most popular page. The Plant Atlas website, launched in Spring 2023 and externally-hosted but accessible via links on the BSBI homepage and drop-down menu, attracted 1.3 million pageviews from 128,000 users during the period under review.

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Webpage Views 2024/25 vs 2023/24 (000's)				
Rank	Webpage	2024/25	2023/24	% Change
1	Plant Atlas 2020 (externally hosted) plantatlas2020.org	1,300.0	686.8	+189%
	Maps bsbi.org/maps	183.6	186.7	-2%
2	Homepage bsbi.org/	175.7	67.1	+162%
3	Field Meetings and Indoor Events bsbi.org/field-meetings-and-indoor-events	22.3	15.0	+49%
4	Field Identification Skills Certificates (FISC) bsbi.org/field-skills	20.7	17.8	+16%
5	New Year Plant Hunt bsbi.org/new-year-plant-hunt	17.8	19.1	-7%
	Total number of pageviews to the five most popular webpages	420.1	305.7	+37%

Outreach and engagement

BSBI members, staff and volunteers continued to present lectures to the public, support conservation and outreach projects both locally and nationally, and provide advice and guidance to national bodies and agencies.

Members of the Committee for Wales attended and exhibited at the Welsh Government Biodiversity Day in May 2024 at the Senedd. They also responded to a Senedd Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee Consultation on 'Halting and reversing the loss of nature by 2030'. In Ireland, BSBI contributed to a Knowledge Sharing event on future biological monitoring needs, organised by Ireland's National Biodiversity Data Centre, and attended a Grasslands Conservation Strategy workshop organised by National Parks & Wildlife Service and the National Biodiversity Centre.

Members in Scotland commented on two national consultations during the year under review: "Meeting our '30 by 30' biodiversity commitment on Terrestrial and Freshwater sites: Consultation on legislative proposals" and "Biodiversity Metric for Scotland's Planning system - Key issues". They also contributed to discussions on the Implementation Plan for the Scottish Plant Biodiversity Strategy and the associated development of species scorecards and provided a letter of support for a grant application to the Royal Society of Edinburgh, seeking funding for an aquatic plant survey project in Kirkcudbrightshire. The Scotland Officer also gave talks about the Society's work to several horticultural societies and led nine guided walks, attended by more than 200 people in total, as part of the Eco-Museum of Scottish Mining Landscapes Project; reports on the walks were published on the Museum's website.

BSBI display material (leaflets and posters) were also made available for volunteer-manned exhibits at local outreach events across Britain and Ireland.

Reaching out to the next generation of botanists, BSBI display material was included in the delegate packs of plant science students attending the Gatsby Plant Summer School. BSBI staff members also attended the 2024 Botanical University Challenge (BUC) competition and Student Botany Festival, held over three days in August at University of Oxford and aimed at plant science students. BSBI had a stand displaying BSBI material and ran a very popular 'mini-FISC' at Oxford Botanic Garden where students could use a selection of field keys to help them identify a selection of plant specimens. All the finalists, quarter-finalists and semi-finalists in the BUC competition were given a one-year digital/ student membership of BSBI as a prize and were encouraged to access BSBI resources and attend events such as the British & Irish Botanical Conference, which many of them did: four students from BUC also exhibited and/ or gave flash talks at the Conference about their research and two also went on to join BSBI Events & Communications Committee. Face-to-face interactions with students were rounded off

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for the year in March 2025 with a display stand at the Scotland's Nature Student Conference, held at Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh.

Media Coverage

The Society continued to build links and strengthen relationships with print and broadcast media throughout the year under review; this included building up new relationships at regional and local level, by publicising county-level finds of eye-catching plants, as well as strengthening ongoing relationships with national media contacts and contributing to prestigious scientific journals.

The most high-profile plant find during the period under review was the discovery in August 2024 by BSBI member Richard Bate of a single *Epipogium aphyllum* (Ghost Orchid); this was the first sighting for 15 years of Britain's rarest orchid, which it was feared might have gone extinct. Richard's find, the exact location of which was kept secret, was confirmed by BSBI Head of Science Dr Kevin Walker and reported to national media via a BSBI press release. The resulting media coverage included a television appearance by Richard on BBC World Today; interviews on BBC Radio 4's Today programme and BBC Radio 5 Live, LBC News and various local radio stations. Print coverage included articles in *The Times*, *The Guardian*, the *Daily Mail* and *BBC Wildlife Magazine*, as well as local newspapers and websites, and a follow-up letter from the finder of the 1982 Ghost Orchid was published in *The Guardian*. In all his media appearances, Richard was keen to point out his BSBI membership and his gratitude for the Society's support for amateur botanists like himself.

Other notable plant finds made by BSBI members and/ or confirmed by BSBI Vice-County Recorders and staff, and reported in local and regional media, included the discovery of a population of *Carex lasiocarpa* (Slender Sedge) in full bloom at Askham Bog, Yorkshire; and an *Orchis simia* (Monkey Orchid) was found in a Cambridge College Garden. *Hypopitys monotropa* (Yellow Bird's-nest) was spotted in Killarney National Park after a gap of 128 years, the find confirmed by Dr Rory Hodd and reported on RTE's Morning Ireland; and the refind of *Spiranthes spiralis* (Autumn Lady's-tresses) in Co. Galway was reported in the *Irish Independent*, *Galway Daily* and on various websites.

The find of a *Neottia nidus-avis* (Bird's-nest Orchid) in the Tyne Valley, with a mention of BSBI records, was reported in *The Guardian's* Country Diary in June 2024, and in September another Country Diary column in *The Guardian* reported on a BSBI survey they had accompanied in Co. Down during which a colony of *Limonium procerum* (Tall Sea-lavender) was refound. The NatureScot website and several local papers reported on the results of a volunteer survey led by partners including BSBI to count numbers of the rare *Lychnis viscaria* (Sticky Catchfly) in the Ochil Hills. Micheline Sheehy Skeffington, BSBI President 2022-24, appeared on Radio Kerry talking about Ragwort, while Chris Miles, Vice-County Recorder and BSBI's former Chair (until 21 November 2024) appeared on BBC Radio 4's Open Country programme, reporting on the wild plants found on a walk around the Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust (WWT) reserve at Caerlaverock in southwest Scotland. The Ireland Officer also contributed articles on Irish plant finds for *Biodiversity Ireland* and *British Wildlife* magazine.

Media coverage of Plant Atlas 2020, launched to great acclaim in the media in March 2023, continued during the period under review, with a glowing review in the prestigious *Irish Naturalists' Journal*; mentions in an editorial in the Royal Horticultural Society's magazine, in the State of the Environment report published by Ireland's Environmental Protection Agency, in *The Journal* and on the Yahoo News website. BSBI data from the Plant Atlas fed into the *State of Yorkshire's Nature* report, which received regional media coverage, for example in *Yorkshire Bylines* and the *Yorkshire Post*, with quotes from BSBI Head of Science Kevin Walker. Kevin and BSBI Scotland Officer Matt Harding co-authored a paper which was published in *Scottish Forestry* on the spread of Sitka Spruce in Britain and Ireland, building on Plant Atlas 2020 findings

BSBI has increasingly become the first port of call for print and broadcast media covering stories involving wild plants, fact-checking and planning high-profile television series: in November 2024, the Communications Officer and Countries Manager met with producers at the BBC Natural History Unit to discuss how BSBI might contribute to a new TV series being planned on the life of plants.

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In Ireland, the results of the New Year Plant Hunt (NYPH) featured once again on 'Mooney Goes Wild', Ireland's premier nature programme on RTE Radio 1, and on local radio and in various websites and periodicals including the *Irish Examiner*. In Great Britain, NYPH findings were covered in *Horticulture Week*, the *Hampshire Chronicle*, *Wharfedale Observer*, on Mark Avery's blog and the Bird Guides' and Countryside Jobs' websites.

Media coverage of the kind listed above raises the Society's profile to target audiences and may also lead to engagement: a full-length opinion article by the BSBI Communications Officer, about how birders can get involved in plant recording, appeared in the Winter issue of *BTO News*, the membership magazine of the British Trust for Ornithology. The following issue published a letter from a BTO member who was inspired by the article to sign up for the BSBI's Identiplant course.

The Society also continued to build and diversify its social media profile during the year under review. Following management changes at X (formerly Twitter and previously by far the Society's main social media platform) and a subsequent decline worldwide in use of this platform, BSBI launched accounts in 2024 on three other platforms - Threads, Bluesky and TikTok – and posted more frequently on the BSBI LinkedIn page. The main BSBI Bluesky account is being supported by accounts run by various staff members and trustees, and this has rapidly become the most vibrant social media platform for botanists of all ages and skill levels, while the volunteer-run TikTok account was targeted at, and helped us reach, a younger demographic. BSBI staff, officers and volunteer members continued to offer plant identification support to the wider public across all social media platforms, particularly on a weekly basis under the #wildflowerhour banner.

	Social media followers as at 31 March (000's)		
	2025	2024	% Change
Facebook (Britain)	13.0	13.0	-
Facebook (Ireland)	3.6	3.5	+3%
Twitter	40.3	43.1	-6%
Bluesky	7.3	-	n/a
Instagram	11.5	10.0	+15%
TikTok	1.0	-	n/a
Total	76.7	69.6	+10%

Income Diversification

In order to operate sustainably, and to encourage participation and support for BSBI's core goals from beyond the Society, income from membership is supplemented by grants and donations from a range of other sources. Income generation is directed through the *Income Diversification Strategy 2020-2023*, which was reviewed in 2023 and extended to 2027, with work led by the Fundraising and Engagement Manager. This Strategy aims to keep BSBI's income at a level to support its strategic work, and from a broader range of funding streams, thereby further improving the Society's financial resilience. The Society is grateful to all the individuals, organisations and grant-making bodies that have contributed towards BSBI's work in this period. BSBI 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.

Strategic Overview

The BSBI Strategic Plan 2024-27 sets out the priorities of the Society's work towards the vision of a world where wild plants thrive and are valued and understood. During the year under review, as you can see in this report, progress has been made across all three Goals.

To inspire, build and support a diverse community of botanists and develop the skills base (Goal 1), BSBI has broadened opportunities for learning, by expanding the training offering and publishing an updated botanical Skills Ladder, clarifying learning pathways. Local engagement has been increased,

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for example through BSBI's field meetings and New Year Plant Hunt, and it has also continued to support survey and recording and the Vice-County Recorder network via the work of its Countries Support Team in each country, including work to identify and overcome barriers to recording and data mobilisation, and to improve training and support for recorders at all skill levels.

To provide high quality, impartial data and interpretation for research and to help address key environmental issues (Goal 2), BSBI gathered 2.8 million records during the year under review, much helped by the new BSBI Recording App. A suite of new recording activities and new survey methods for a Wildflower Hunt (phenology) survey and a montane summit survey have been developed. Also, interpretation of BSBI data continues to provide evidence to underpin conservation and land use decision-making through its Botanical Heatmaps and an update to the GB Red List for vascular plants.

To raise the profile of plants and botany so that wild plants are better understood and more highly valued (Goal 3), BSBI employees have been working behind the scenes to develop a new Communications Strategy and Toolkit, and to redesign the website, both of which will be launched in the year ahead, improving impact and reach.

The Society was hugely fortunate to receive very generous legacies in 2024 from long-standing members: this has allowed us to invest in capacity to better support members and deliver BSBI's plans going forwards. Trustees have agreed that these legacies will be used to make step changes in what is done for botany and wild plants, making it possible to invest in important science projects, data support, training development, organisational resilience and in a contingency fund for Country Officer roles. Everyone at BSBI is very grateful for this support from members' legacies, which will make a big difference to what can be achieved.

Foundations

Work to strengthen the Society's five strategic foundations also continues:

Foundation 1: Motivated, skilled people

BSBI has developed guidance and training resources for recorders and data users; supported Vice-County Recorders in growing their local teams; and set up an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Working Group and published an EDI statement.

Foundation 2: Strong relationships

During the year under review, the range of partners worked with has grown still further and there are clear agreements in place for how we work together. To give just a few examples, there is now a data sharing agreement in place with Scottish Forestry; BSBI continues to support Botanical University Challenge; and discussions continue with the Danish Botanical Society to share protocols for BSBI's Field Identification Skills Certificates (FISCs).

Foundation 3: Strong governance

BSBI published its Governance Handbook in 2024 to provide a clear summary of how BSBI governance works, how decisions are made and where to go for further information. Committees have been working hard to embrace timely succession planning; for example, Science & Data Committee's Secretary is due to step down in two years' time but advertising to members resulted in a new Secretary coming forward who can shadow the current role-holder prior to handover. New committee members were also recruited at BSBI events and outreach activities.

Foundation 4: Effective data management

A Data Plan has been put in place to improve the data management infrastructure, documentation, guidance and user training; work has continued on data infrastructure and members' access to the DDb was launched this year. These are just some of the areas the Data Plan Steering Group has been working on to improve data management, with quarterly meetings to review and oversee progress against the Data Plan.

Foundation 5: Sustainable business model

Since the *Income Diversification Strategy 2020-2023* launched in 2021, BSBI has been working hard to diversify income sources, to ensure long term financial resilience and sustainability. Income pie charts and other information at the Financial Review section 4 illustrate progress made. This Annual Report and Accounts and the Annual Review are shared with BSBI members each Autumn and those attending the AGM each November can also listen to an update from the Board, when there is an opportunity to ask questions.

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 website, events and media coverage are all ways in which the Society works to inform and educate 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.

To learn more about BSBI and all it has to offer:



www.bsbi.org

Also, see:

www.plantatlas2020.org
www.BritishAndIrishBotany.org
www.PlantAlert.org
www.identiplant.bsbi.org



<https://x.com/BSBIbotany>



<https://www.facebook.com/BSBI2011>
<https://www.facebook.com/IrishSectionBSBI/>



<https://www.instagram.com/bsbibotany/>



<https://www.linkedin.com/company/botanical-society-of-britain-and-ireland>



<https://www.youtube.com/botanicalsocietyofbritainandireland>



<https://www.tiktok.com/@bsbibotany>



<https://bsky.app/profile/bsbibotany.bsky.social>



<https://www.threads.com/@bsbibotany>

3. Fundraising

Fundraising in BSBI is currently following the roadmap of the *Income Diversification Strategy 2020-2023 (IDS)* which was reviewed in 2023 & extended to 2027. This has overarching objectives to increase income to ensure a consistently balanced budget, support the wider Strategic Plan, diversify income streams and maximise existing income, for example, from membership and partnerships.

BSBI employs one member of staff, the Fundraising & Engagement Manager, to oversee its fundraising (as part of their role), and BSBI is subscribed to both the Fundraising Regulator and the Charity Excellence Framework.



Registered with
**FUNDRAISING
REGULATOR**



Great care is taken to follow good fundraising practices, and no complaints have been received, either directly to the BSBI or via the Regulator, with regards to the Society's fundraising activities. Also, BSBI does not undertake fundraising that represents an unreasonable intrusion, is overly persistent or places undue pressure on an individual to donate.

The *Code of Fundraising Practice*, issued by the Fundraising Regulator sets the standards that apply to fundraising conducted by all charitable institutions and third-party fundraisers in the UK. From 1 November 2025, fundraising regulation in the UK is evolving to reflect modern fundraising practices. The Fundraising & Engagement Manager has reviewed the new Code and will ensure compliance.

Return on Investment (RoI) on Fundraising Activities

Fundraising is an organisational priority within BSBI which is carefully monitored against the *Income Diversification Strategy*. Updates are reported by the CEO at every quarterly board meeting and overall progress is discussed and reviewed annually in December. Trustees constantly learn from its fundraising activities as some outcomes are more successful than others. One of the ways in which Trustees measure fundraising performance is the Return on Investment (RoI) metric. Although RoI must always be looked at in a wider context, it provides a useful guide to assess performance against sector benchmarks, to assess progress over time and of course to ensure that valuable charitable funds are being directed in the right way and value for money is being achieved.

The Chartered Institute of Fundraising (www.ciof.org.uk) does not have a specific approach to calculating RoI, instead guiding it to be appraised on a case-by-case basis. BSBI has chosen a straightforward RoI methodology: If BSBI incurs £1 on fundraising activities & generates £1.50 fundraising income, the $RoI = 1.5$. An average benchmark of 3 was proposed to BSBI by the Fundraising Standards Institute (FSI) when advising on the *Income Diversification Strategy* and adopted by Trustees as a long-term aim through its Strategy.

BSBI has carefully assessed the income sources to be included within its RoI calculation; all donations are included, some grants and contracts and a proportion of other income felt to be directly linked to fundraising activities. The costs directly incurred in delivering these activities are included within the RoI calculation. Some sources are recurring; others are short-term or one-off.

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For the year under review, Trustees are very pleased to report that overall, for each £1 spent on fundraising, £11.90 (2024: £3.80) of income has been generated, representing an RoI of 11.9. This figure is extraordinary in that it has been driven largely through legacy income (recognised as being a more volatile income source) which comprised three legacies; two of which are for more than £0.2M each.

Other than for legacies, RoI would have been 1.7, a drop compared to 2024. Income from trusts and foundations is a particular source of focus for the year to come, as BSBI looks to continue to diversify income sustainably.

Looking ahead, Trustees will continue to guide and monitor BSBI's fundraising activities whilst working towards a stable & recurring RoI of 3. The Board will also continue to ensure that BSBI's fundraising activities thrive, and the Fundraising & Engagement Manager has adequate capacity to continue to develop opportunities aligned with BSBI's charitable aims.

4. Financial Review

Overview

For the year under review, the Board of Trustees is delighted to report Total Income for the year of £1,372k (2024: £818k), a 68% increase vs 2024. Net Income is £455k (2024: £174k); an Operating Surplus of £454k plus investment gains of £1k (2024: £121k plus £53k)

Looking further within these numbers, the Operating Surplus on the Unrestricted General Fund (BSBI's continuing operations) is £493k for 2025 (2024: £120k), well ahead of the Budget set by the Board in March 2024, and the reasons for this variance are set out in the Income section below. BSBI continues its journey of progress towards delivering the Society's operations in a financially sustainable manner as illustrated below:

	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
Operating Surplus (Deficit) on the General Fund £000 *	493*	120	(27)	3	(15)	(25)	(33)	(61)	(146)

*This, together with the deficit of (£25k) on the Unrestricted Strategic Development Reserve, (£14k) deficits on Restricted Reserves and Gains on Investments of £1k, altogether comprise Net Income of £455k as per the SOFA.

Economic & Political Backdrop

The UK and Ireland economies in 2024/25 have been shaped by a mixture of economic and political challenges including political and financial change and economic uncertainty through the impact of higher UK Employer's National Insurance, implemented in April 2025, and the widely felt threat of US tariffs. It is against this backdrop that this report is written.

Investments and Cash

Total Return on investments (total gains/losses, plus investment income, less fees) was £11,742 (2024: £64,351).

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RBC Brewin Dolphin (RBCBD) is BSBI's investment manager and, under its guidance, the BSBI Board continues to operate an ethical investment stance aligned with its charitable aims, designed to have limited exposure to organisations engaged in the fossil fuel industry. This approach was incorporated into an updated BSBI Investment Policy approved by the Board in March 2025.

Total Return of BSBI's investment portfolio this year (net of fees) & a comparison to other metrics:

BSBI's portfolio - this year	+1.6%
BSBI's portfolio - last year	+9.6%
RBCBD Risk Category 6 (Benchmark)	+6.5%
ARC Charity Steady Growth (Peer Group Benchmark)	+2.7%
CPI +2%	+4.6%

In 2024/25, BSBI's investment portfolio was muted in comparison to 2023/24 when it benefited from strong performance in North American equities, specifically in the Information Technology sector. Also, the final quarter of 2024/25 was a tough quarter which pulled down 2024/25 full year performance.

Key reasons for the underperformance of BSBI's portfolio vs Benchmarks are as follows:

- Markets were buffeted by erratic changes in trade policy in the US which created heightened uncertainty
- Equity markets were particularly volatile, with US equities falling by c7%, significantly lagging other regions. Therefore, within the portfolio, positions in US equity funds detracted
- In addition, markets experienced a rotation in leadership with the technology sector giving up some ground on concerns around the competitive threat of China's low-cost AI company, DeepSeek. Consequently, equity funds with a focus on technology were particularly weak. Interestingly, these funds rebounded very strongly in QE June 2025
- Elsewhere within the portfolio, other assets such as fixed interest/bonds and gold proved to be good diversifiers during the volatility

It has been pleasing to see a recovery in the quarter after year end when BSBI's portfolio total return was 4.3% (net of all fees) compared to the ARC Charity Steady Growth peer group benchmark return, which was 3.1%.

At year end, the Society had Net Assets of £1,463,728 (2024: £1,008,868); Fixed Asset Investments of £740,932 (2024: £729,190) and Net Current Assets of £722,796 (2024: £279,678).

BSBI held £219,649 Cash at Bank at 31 March 2025 (2024: £316,293) and Current Asset Investments (treasury deposits on fixed terms of more than 3 months) of £475,000 (2024: £85,000). These assets are managed in line with the BSBI Treasury Policy developed and implemented during 2024.

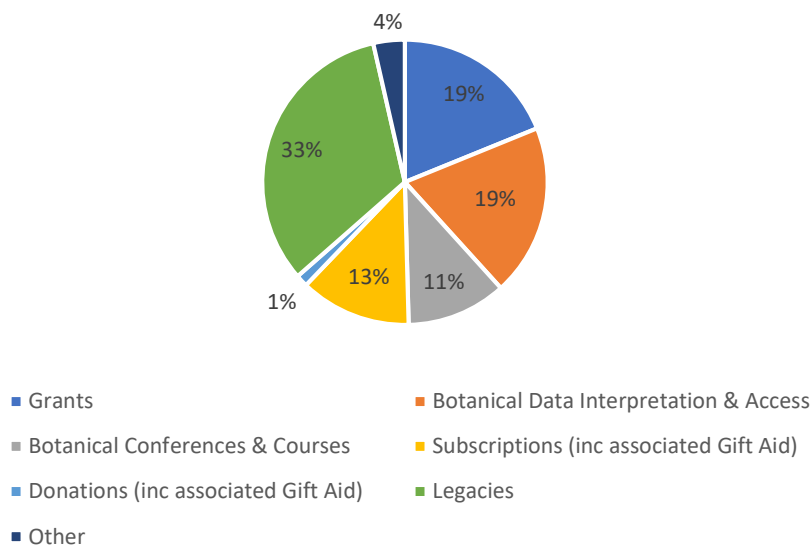
Income

Having reached an important income milestone of £0.5M just two years ago, the Board is pleased to report that income has now surpassed £1M; 2025 income was £1,372,22 (2024: £818,239).

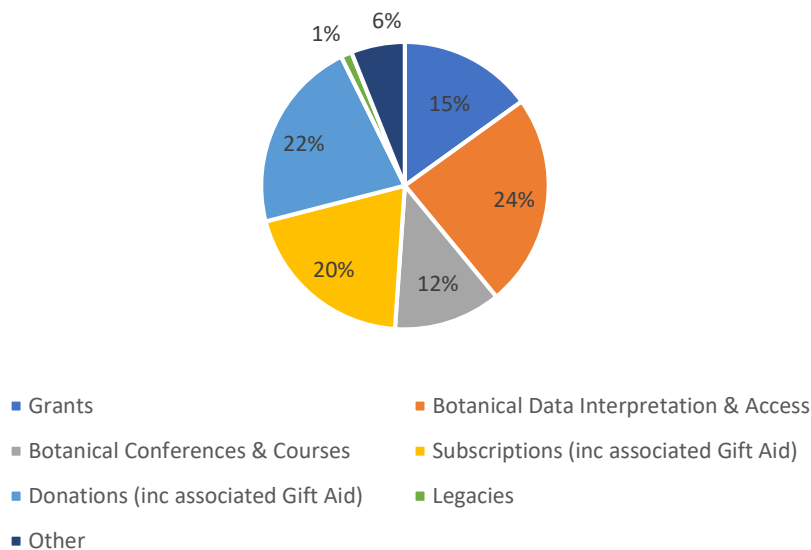
A visual illustration of BSBI's income categories and a comparison to the previous year follows below.

It is the hallmark of a healthy organisation to have several stable income categories (sources). This profile aims to reduce the risk of a reduction in any one category threatening the future of an organisation and this aim is central to BSBI's *Income Diversification Strategy*. It is pleasing, therefore, to report that BSBI has a total of nine income categories; six (as pictured) and three more contained within the Other category.

BSBI Income Categories - Actual 2024/25



BSBI Income Categories - Actual 2023/24



The clearly visible highlight of the year is **Legacies**; income grew from 1% to a huge 33% of all income, amounting to £451,271 (2024: £9,982) over three individual gifts in wills (2024: three) and trustees are immensely grateful for the generosity shown. These individuals are named & thanked below, and trustees' decisions on how this income will be used to make step changes in BSBI's work for botany and wild plants are described in the Strategy Overview above.

Income generated by **Grants** increased from 15% to 19% and unrestricted income more than doubled to £241k. DAERA joined the roster of BSBI's statutory funders in 2023/24 year with a five-year grant running to 2028 and 2024/25 saw a full year of activities with income reflecting this: £102k vs £38k the year before. Also, the grant for the Priority Plants on SSSIs in Wales project, from the Nature Networks Programme (delivered by the Heritage Fund on behalf of the Welsh Government), began in June 2024 for which BSBI received grant income of £57k in 2024/25. Grants continue to be an important way of delivering nationally important botanical objectives and a crucial source of recurring income. Thanks go to BSBI's many partners, named below, for their continued support of all that BSBI achieves.

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Botanical Data Interpretation and Access generated £267k (2024: £196k) income and BSBI is pleased to help many organisations achieve their aims. Natural England (NE) funded partnership work with BSBI to further improve the accessibility and mobilisation of BSBI plant data for those making evidence-based decisions. With a full year of activity in 2024/25, income from NE's Supporting Local Engagement in England contract increased from £5k to £67k. BSBI also continues to work with the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC), adviser to the UK Government on nature conservation, as part of the National Plant Monitoring Scheme (NPMS) partnership. There are many other long term relationships too; with The Environment Agency and with UKCEH under a three-year contract to deliver information re non-native plant species and annual agreements exist to provide data access to a range of conservation and land management organisations including Plantlife, Royal Botanic Garden Kew, National Botanic Garden of Ireland, RSPB and National Trust Scotland, as well as a number of universities, institutes and other organisations to undertake scientific research on a diverse range of topics.

Botanical Conferences, Courses & Education: although the % has remained fairly static at 11% (2024: 12%), income of £155k (2024: £99k) has been heavily driven by the pleasing growth in Identiplant with income increasing from £46k to £81k as demand has been better fulfilled.

Although a smaller % of total income (13% vs 20%), **Subscriptions (including associated Gift Aid)** experienced yet another year of solid growth; +6% to £173k. It was pleasing to hold Membership Subscription rates unchanged rates for calendar year 2025 so this increase is entirely down to growth in membership numbers.

The **Membership Retention KPI %** (% of members choosing to remain members throughout the year), measured since 2019, has edged up to its highest ever level of 92% (2024: 91%). The stability and incremental growth of this KPI, alongside another year of good membership growth, reinforces that members continue to enjoy and value all that BSBI offers.

Donations, including associated Gift Aid: Thousands of members supported the Society this year, and individuals and organisations made donations and contributions of all types - to sponsorships, grants, for attending events, towards BSBI's key projects, as part of fundraising drives and through generous gifts in Wills. Total donation income fell from £177k in 2023/24 to £19k in 2024/25, however it is important to note that 2023/24 income was lifted by a one-off, unusually large and anonymous donation of £120k.

Thank You; Whilst some income is given anonymously, BSBI wishes to thank by name the following individuals and organisations who have generously donated or otherwise supported BSBI's projects and goals, while also thanking everyone who has contributed to and made use of BSBI's resources and supported its aims, without whom BSBI could not continue to achieve all that it does:

Celia Baxter
Gerry Firkins
Brenda Harold
Roger Horton
Mary Parker
The late Michael E Braithwaite
The late Roy Maycock
The late Michael F Wildish
The Estate of the late Mary Fry
Greenwings Wildlife Tours Ltd
Habitat Aid Ltd
Mariposa Nature Tours Ltd
The Oakdale Trust

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The Society 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 and others, namely Natural England (NE), Environment Agency (EA), NatureScot, Department for Food, Environment & Rural Affairs (DEFRA), Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC), UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology (UKCEH), Royal Botanic Gardens Kew, Natural History Museum, National Lottery Heritage Fund, The National Trust, Plantlife, Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) in Ireland, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA), National Museums Northern Ireland (NMNI), National Botanic Garden of Ireland - Glasnevin and Natural Resources Wales (NRW) all continue to be long-term supporters and the income received from them, whether by grant, for botanical data or by donation, contributes to supporting those of the Society's staff most closely engaged in the programmes and projects of mutual benefit.

Other Income: This category of income - comprising Botanical Publications, Royalties, Income from Investments (including Bank Deposit Interest) - collectively remained virtually static at £49k (2024: £50k). Within this, however, the emphasis of **Botanical Publications** income is pivoting towards e-book sales, which grew by +3% to over £6k, while paper book sales fell back from £11k to £9k. **Bank Deposit Interest** almost trebled to £14k due to the careful investment of higher cash balances, with activities guided by a new BSBI Treasury Policy implemented in December 2024.

Expenditure

Unrestricted Fund expenditure increased by +33% in the year to £884,084 (2024: £661,821) and a few notable highlights are covered below.

Expenditure on Raising Funds remained stable at £135,053 (2024: £137,831). To improve the visibility of Membership Costs, the Direct costs of member publications (e.g. *BSBI News*) were moved into here in 2023/24 from **Expenditure on Charitable Activities; Botanical Publications**. As mentioned earlier, it is very pleasing that 40% (2024: 33%) of members have chosen the digital membership format which has allowed BSBI to weather cost increases, save valuable charitable funds and, importantly, reduce environmental impact.

Expenditure on Charitable Activities amounted to £783,706 (2024: £559,230) growing by +40%. This category has increased significantly and in line with Budget expectations. A large part of the increase can be explained by the cost of more time and more employees being engaged in generating income such as Natural England contracts, which increased by £58k to £184k in 2024/25. As noted above, the Nature Networks Fund Priority Plants on SSSIs in Wales grant began in June 2024 and the salary cost of the Wales Officer, engaged to deliver this, is included in here.

Other cost changes are explained below:

- **Botanical Conferences, Courses & Education** is £169,721 (2024: £73,310) and, as explained above, this increase reflects growth in Identiplant (Income: 2024: £81k vs 2023: £46k) and therefore costs, e.g. to tutors, have increased in line. Also, improvements have been made in the accuracy of reporting the cost of support staff time. Feedback is constantly sought to inform these activities. For example, BSBI uses funds generated by Identiplant and FISC educational training to identify how it can adapt, improve and expand its offering.
- **Governance Staff Costs** remained well controlled and fell slightly to £61,659 (2024: £63,954) This mostly comprises the time of the CEO and Finance Manager.
- **Professional & HR advice, Payroll & Accounting** costs of £21,740 (2024: £5,664) include the one-off implementation & training cost of a HR system to support the growth in staff numbers and to support good governance, the cost of a triennial salary benchmarking exercise

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designed to ensure that BSBI's staff are paid appropriately and there was also legal advice to support BSBI's anticipated registration with the Charities Regulator in Ireland. To assist the part-time Finance Manager, bookkeeping services have been outsourced since May 2024 and this cost £5k.

Valuing Volunteering

BSBI is immensely fortunate, as it is every year, in being able to supplement its financial resources with the gift of freely and generously volunteered time. Whether it be the gift of botanical expertise to identify and record plant data, serving as a Trustee or Committee member, authoring a BSBI Handbook, helping to organise and run BSBI's lively calendar of botanical events, generously passing on expert knowledge to teach other botanists, acting as a Vice-County Recorder or national plant Referee or something else entirely, all of it is hugely important.

Although Trustees have always known that the nature and scale of volunteering for BSBI is vast, measuring time and placing an accurate value on it is innately difficult. In recent years, the Board has been pleased to make considerable steps forward through the design of a methodology to estimate volunteer time spent on various, different types of volunteering and to use this to estimate the value of volunteering to the Society. The results for the year are set out in overview below, with some further context on the Data Support and Recording Network aspects of these. The overall results show an increase this year due to a much higher number of records submitted during the New Year Plant Hunt (almost 25,000 records submitted vs just over 10,000 two years ago)

- **20+ types of volunteering exist (2023/24: 20+)**
- **Over 13,000 days volunteered (2023/24: just under 11,000)**

Research indicates some charities use National Minimum Wage to value volunteering. Others use different rates such as the £20 per hour rate placed on volunteering by Heritage Fund (known more widely as The National Lottery Heritage Fund).

Individuals undertaking volunteering time to BSBI are from all walks of life, with different experiences and skillsets – many with important botanical knowledge built up over a lifetime - however, it is the coming together of the collective effort that persuades the Board that every hour volunteered is equally important and valuable. As such, a single £20 per hour and 7.5 hour working day are applied in arriving at its valuation.

- **Days volunteered in 2024/25 are valued at a vast £2.0m (2024: £1.6m)**

The Board continues to be deeply appreciative of this vast contribution which illustrates BSBI's true scale and reach. BSBI has always been indebted to all its members and others who volunteer. It simply could not fulfil its charitable objectives without this help, and the Board gives its sincere thanks to every person who generously devotes time and effort to helping BSBI thrive; all these people continue to make BSBI the vibrant and energetic organisation it is today.

In recognition of the immense contribution of volunteering to BSBI's achievements, the Board of Trustees makes awards for outstanding contributions to botany (see Section 2, pages 11-12 for this year's awardees) and nominates candidates for honorary membership which are voted upon by members at the Annual General Meeting (see Section 2, page 3).

The Board also prioritises putting into place guidance, training and support for volunteers, under BSBI's Strategy Foundation: "Motivated, Skilled People". This year BSBI Staff have substantially developed guidance and training resources for recorders and data users and have also supported Vice-County Recorders in growing their local teams. This is demonstrated through the following new Key

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Performance Indicators (KPIs), put into place to measure progress in building and supporting the network of recorders who are so vital to all of the Society's work.

Data Support KPIs; During calendar year 2024:

- The BSBI documentation website was viewed by 7,800 people
- 149,765 records were submitted by the BSBI Recording App
- 8 data training events (3 in person, 8 online) were held for recorders, with 250 attendees

Recording Network KPIs; There are a total of 157 recording areas (vice-counties and islands treated as separate recording units) across Britain, Ireland, the Channel Islands and Isle of Man. Of these, during 2024/25:

- 73 (46%) have Vice-County Recorder (VCR) teams: 65 with at least two VCRs (grown from 64 before January's Science & Data Committee meeting (S&D) and 8 further with a non-VCR iRecord verifier team member
- 78 (50%) have a solo-VCR
- 6 (4%) have a vacancy:
 - i. South Devon VC3 – A VCR has been nominated for approval at the May S&D
 - ii. Surrey VC17 – Two VCRs have been nominated for approval at the May S&D
 - iii. Essex VC18 – Continues vacant
 - iv. Essex VC19 – Continues vacant
 - v. Buckinghamshire VC24 – exploring with local natural history societies to identify candidates
 - vi. Kintyre VC101 – Three VCRs have been nominated for approval at the May S&D meeting.

These numbers illustrate that BSBI is close to achieving parity between solo-VCRs and VCR teams; 78 solo VCRs and 73 teams.

Overall, 229 VCR posts are filled across Britain and Ireland. In addition, there are 119 iRecord verifiers in place across 80 VCs, of which 24 are filled by non-VCRs (broader members of a county team).

109 VCs returned a 2024 Annual Report against a possible total figure of 157. This compares to 97 reports returned for 2023, an increase of 12.

5. Looking Ahead - a Message from Julia Hanmer, BSBI's Chief Executive



"As the publication of our Plant Atlas 2020 demonstrated, in this time of biodiversity loss and a changing climate, our wild plants have never been more in need of the understanding, appreciation and support that BSBI is uniquely placed to provide.

In the year ahead, we will continue to focus on priorities set out in our Strategic Plan for 2024-2027 to address this need. Thanks to the very generous legacies received from members in 2024, we can make real step changes in our work for botany and wild plants by investing in science projects, data support, training development, organisational resilience and in a contingency fund for Country Officer roles.

We will continue to build a diverse community of botanists and to share knowledge and foster a love of plants through field meetings and indoor events, training, grants, publications, periodicals, communications, our website, our social media, outreach and membership.

We will trial expansion of FISC, the industry standard for botanical skills assessments, into Ireland and further expand provision of our Identiplant plant identification training, as well as broadening our overall training offering, including providing specialist training for the most challenging plant groups.

Our *Science Strategy 2024-29* will guide our work in providing high quality, impartial data and interpretation for research and to help address key environmental issues. We will continue to increase the number of records flowing into the BSBI Distribution Database, improve ease of data entry via the new BSBI Recording App and develop a 'desktop' version of the App which will provide a quick and reliable way of entering records logged in the field using BSBI recording cards. We will also provide more guidance and training for our data users.

In partnership with Natural England (NE) and the UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology, we will publish the GB Red List, which will provide an assessment of threat to plant species in Britain, based on internationally recognised IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) criteria. Red Lists are crucial in helping conservation organisations to prioritise and target conservation action.

We continue to support surveying and recording and our Vice-County Recorder networks in each country via the work of our Countries Support team in England (including work to identify and overcome barriers to participation in recording and data mobilisation, funded by NE), in Ireland (funded by NPWS and including our Targeted Aquatic Plant Project and an Irish Grassland project), in Scotland (funded by NatureScot) and in Wales (including the Priority Plants on Sites of Scientific Interest in Wales project, funded by the Nature Networks Programme). In Northern Ireland we will continue to develop botanical skills and evidence, funded by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs Northern Ireland Environment Fund.

We will continue to encourage participation in the New Year Plant Hunt across Britain and Ireland and the National Plant Monitoring Scheme in the UK. We will also seek funding to roll out a new Wildflower Hunt to provide evidence on how our flora is responding to the changing climate.

We will implement our new Communications Strategy to further raise the profile of wild plants and botany and launch our new, improved website, increasing its impact and useability.

Our work to strengthen our foundations and resilience will also continue, by publishing and taking forward a new Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) action plan and further progression of our application to register with the Charities Regulator in Ireland, amongst other priorities.

In summary, in the year ahead, BSBI's members, the botanists recording wild plants, sharing their knowledge and fostering a love of plants and our science and data, will continue to make a unique contribution to the evidence and action needed to ensure wild plants thrive and are valued, and to shape and prioritise efforts to conserve them."

6. Structure, governance and management

Constitution

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

Board of Trustees (Directors)

The Board of Trustees (Directors) are the Society's legal trustees. The Board governs all BSBI's activities and is assisted on a day-to-day basis by the Chief Executive. Together, they coordinate the work of the principal honorary office bearers and the staff, and their interaction with the Board and the Society's membership.

In terms of its Articles of Association, the Society is governed by a Board of Directors, members of which are also Charity Trustees. Trustees are elected by the members of the Society in an Annual General Meeting (AGM). The Board may also co-opt Trustees, who then serve until the next AGM. There is a maximum number of 12 Trustees. One third of the Trustees (other than those currently co-opted) retire by rotation at the next AGM (20 November 2025) 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 on 31 March 2025 and at the date of approval of these accounts, except as noted, are set out below together with their dates of first appointment.

Dr CM Miles (Chair until 21 Nov 24)	Appointed 25 Nov 2017, retired 21 Nov 2024
Dr S Knapp OBE (Chair from 21 Nov 24)	Appointed 25 Nov 2017
Mr AD Thomas OBE	Appointed 25 Nov 2017, retired 16 May 2024
Dr M Dean	Appointed 21 Nov 2020
Dr HJ Crouch	Appointed 22 June 2021
Miss KN Jones	Appointed 19 Nov 2021
Mr B O'Kane	Appointed 17 Nov 2022
Prof P Hollingsworth FRSE	Appointed 17 Nov 2022
Dr M Long	Appointed 21 Mar 2023
Dr T Dines	Appointed 16 Nov 2023
Mr RJ Allanach	Appointed 6 Jan 2024
Mrs K Nicola J Tainton	Appointed 19 Jan 2024
Ms SJ Edwards	Appointed 21 Nov 2024
Mr A Lack	Appointed 21 Nov 2024

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 Articles of Association and the Board is provided with regular updates on BSBI's financial performance and status. Trustees are encouraged to avail themselves of Charity Commission and other regulator 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 effectively. In this period, BSBI developed and consulted on a new Governance Handbook (see Strategic Plan, Good Governance above)

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Honorary Officers

The principal honorary officers of the Society are the President, the Chair and Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees and the Honorary General Secretary. They are assisted by three staff members: Chief Executive, Head of Science and Finance Manager, all of whom attend Board meetings in order to do so. Other staff members attend as and when the need arises.

Details of other office bearers, including Vice-County Recorders and the panel of Referees and Specialists, the Hon. Field Meetings Secretary and the Editor-in-Chief of *British & Irish Botany* are to be found in the *BSBI Yearbook 2025*.

The Staff

As at 31 March 2025 the Society employed 16 staff (2024: 14), equivalent to 14 full time posts (2024: 12), to work with the principal honorary office bearers in coordinating, interpreting and supporting the work of its members and in the administration of the Society's affairs. The Chief Executive leads the team of employees, which is structured into these key functions:

- Science & Data
- Country Support
- Membership, Engagement & Communications
- Finance

Committees

The *BSBI Yearbook 2025* sets out full details of BSBI's Committees, more details of which are outlined below; 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 (All-Ireland), give a more localised focus to the Society's work and play an important role in the governance structure, working alongside the Countries Manager and Country Officers to drive engagement, support the recording community and showcase their country's work to the membership and to the wider public.

For example, the **Committee for Scotland** plays an important role in the organisation of the annual Scottish Botanists' Conference, which attracts a huge number of participants; the **Committee for Ireland** supports the Ireland Officer with organisation of, and participation in, Ireland's Spring Conference and Autumn Meeting; the Vice-County Recorders who sit on the **Committee for Wales** lead on recording activities there; the **Committee for England** holds well-attended online Annual Meetings. Editors of the four country newsletters sit on Country Committees; each does an invaluable job communicating information that matters to BSBI's membership in their respective countries.

BSBI has three Standing or Operational Committees, as follows:

The **Events & Communications Committee** supports staff with organising national events, conferences and field meetings, such as the New Year Plant Hunt and the British & Irish Botanical Conference. 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.

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

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staff of the BSBI Science and Data team. Its Science & Research sub-Committee allocates research grants.

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. This Committee also has two very active working groups of members leading on oversight and development of BSBI's FISC botanical skills assessments and Identiplant training course

The Board of Trustees has two permanent sub committees:

The **Nominations, Awards & Governance Committee** has responsibility for identifying and recommending candidates for election as Trustees, for assuring a steady flow of nominations for awards and for recommending to Trustees any changes to the governance arrangements of the Society.

The **Finance Committee** works closely with the Finance Manager, as Committee Secretary, to assist the Board in ensuring there is a framework for accountability; for examining and reviewing systems and methods of control both financial and otherwise; and for ensuring BSBI complies with all aspects of the law, relevant regulations and good practice. This and its other objectives are set out in a **Terms of Reference** approved in December 2022 which will be reviewed & updated in Autumn 2025. Under its Terms of Reference, the Finance Committee advises the Board on its **Investment Policy**, which underwent its triennial update in March 2025. In December 2024, the Finance Committee also recommended to the Board a **Treasury Policy**, created in response to the more growing needs of the Society. The Honorary Treasurer is an ex-officio member of the Finance Committee and while this role is on hold, the Finance Committee continues to fulfil the responsibilities set out in its Terms of Reference.

The Society's Finance Committee is made up of a minimum of three Trustees and, normally with the Chair of the Board, CEO and Committee Secretary in attendance, meets once a year with the Society's Investment Manager to review investment performance and to hold them to account. Also, the performance and effectiveness review of the Finance Committee in carrying out its Terms of Reference is self-evaluated on a three-yearly basis and its findings reported to the Board for scrutiny. This will take place in Autumn 2025.

In addition to the Committees listed above, the **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion working group** plans and oversees BSBI's EDI Action Plan and regularly reviews progress. This group includes representatives from trustees, staff, and members.

Investment Policy

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

BSBI requires diversification amongst shares, bonds and cash. Trustees have set the Return Objective for Investments to generate a Total Return (net of investment management fees) in excess of UK Inflation (measured by CPI) +2% over the Long Term. Investment income is accumulated; however it remains readily accessible through realisation of liquid investments.

Demonstrating our Commitment to the Environment through Investing

BSBI is fortunate to have an investment portfolio which provides crucial financial resources to help reach financial sustainability and deliver the vision for a world where wild plants thrive and are valued.

Although there are no legal requirements (from the Charity Commission for England and Wales or Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator) to adopt an ethical investing stance, BSBI is committed to

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Environmental, Social & Governance (ESG) investment strategies which promote the protection and health of the natural environment through investing. This has been BSBI's stated commitment for several years now, which remains carefully balanced with the desire to optimise total return from investments to secure all the important work BSBI does for botany now and in the future.

BSBI is reassured to know it is keeping pace with changing attitudes; Civilsociety.co.uk tells us that 2024 research from a group of charities found that the vast majority of UK adults now believe that charities have a responsibility to be environmentally sustainable.

BSBI's trusted Investment Manager, RBC Brewin Dolphin (RBCBD), has advised charities for 70 years and traces its origins back to 1762, even earlier than BSBI's founding in 1836! Its experienced teams are focused on building individual relationships that endure through good times and bad. Under its guidance, BSBI articulates its position on ethical investing in its **Investment Policy**.

Environmental, social and governance (ESG) issues are integrated into RBCBD's investment analysis and stewardship, and engagement are important parts of its investment process. In March 2025, RBCBD reported this Morningstar analysis of BSBI's investment portfolio:

- (1) 3.5% (2024: circa 5%) exposure to companies involved in fossil fuels, based on revenues. This is less than half of the underlying benchmark exposure, currently 9.6%
- (2) 93.5% (2024: 91.5%) of the underlying investments held within collective funds have an ESG risk rating of medium or lower.
- (3) 0% (2024: 0%) exposure to companies with over 10% or more of revenues involved in the production and/or distribution of palm oil
- (4) 0% (2024: 0.1%) exposure to companies with 10% or more of revenues involved in growing genetically modified (GM) crops or the development and/or cultivation of GM seeds & plants

RBCBD is firmly committed to stewardship, ensuring the responsible ownership of assets. It continues to engage with funds to improve climate change reporting and to support investment into renewable infrastructure. Through its partner, Columbia Threadneedle, which provides ESG-specific collaborative engagement services, it also has numerous engagements with leading corporations around protecting and setting biodiversity targets.

In 2023, RBCBD became members of www.Natureaction100.org, a global investor engagement initiative focused on driving greater corporate ambition and action to reverse nature and biodiversity loss.

Nature Action 100



More information can be found in RBCBD's 2024 Annual Stewardship and Engagement Report here: <https://www.brewin.co.uk/stewardship-policy>

All of this work aims to create long term value leading to sustainable benefits for the environment and society and, through these actions and monitoring, BSBI feels reassured its investment activities promote the health and protection of the natural environment.

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 and more information is also included in the Notes to the Accounts below (Note 6).

Risk Management

Like all charities, BSBI operates in an environment in which there are uncertainties and risks. The Board of Trustees works to identify the types of risk to which BSBI is or could be exposed and then assesses the probability and impact of each on the organisation. Each risk is then considered in more detail to understand how it can be either mitigated or managed before arriving at a Current Risk Score.

The Trustees maintain a Risk Register which documents the major risks identified, under the updated themes of Governance, Operational, Finance, Legal compliance and Health & Safety. The Board reviews the Risk Register at its quarterly Board meetings and agrees actions. Trustees are satisfied that this system addresses, mitigates and manages BSBI's exposure to the major risks. Examples of ways in which financial risks are mitigated include:

- i. The Society has in place a comprehensive range of insurance policies in relation to its activities and associated risks, including those for Public & Employer's Liability, Professional Indemnity and Trustee Indemnity. For example, when BSBI expanded FISC & Identiplant into Ireland, checks were made to ensure these activities are adequately insured.
- ii. The Society maintains a Balance Sheet in which listed investments represent substantially all 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 several ways: the investment portfolio is diversified and is subject to the discretionary management of RBC Brewin Dolphin, an independent professional Investment Manager, which follows BSBI's Investment Policy and agreed investment risk profile, reporting to the Trustees in writing quarterly and in person annually. Also, a Client Services review meeting is conducted 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 industry benchmarks and other expectations.
- iii. BSBI operates in Britain, Ireland and overseas and must therefore handle transactions in UK £ Sterling, Euro €, United States Dollar \$. Exchange rate risk is managed by most of its transactions, balances and investments being denominated in UK £ Sterling.
- iv. The Society is exposed to cash flow and liquidity risk. It aims to manage investments and cash to optimise investment income & gains and bank interest. Because the individual investments in BSBI's investment portfolio are freely traded, it is possible to withdraw funds on short notice and this mitigates risk.
- v. An Income & Expenditure Budget is set and approved annually in advance by the Board which is then rigorously 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, to ensure that the Society enters into only appropriate financial commitments within its means.
- vii. Working within the Treasury Policy implemented in December 2024 and with the oversight of BSBI's Finance Committee and Chief Executive, the Finance Manager monitors bank balances and ensures there are sufficient but not excessive liquid funds to meet liabilities as they fall due.
- viii. The impact of the Covid pandemic taught BSBI to develop a flexible mindset which continues to help manage risks.

Principal Risks & Mitigations:

Notwithstanding the above, significant risks can develop and remain and there are currently two risks with a high Current Risk Score to which Trustees' attention is particularly focussed, as noted below:

1) Operational – Data: Loss of data or disruption of business due to the failure or malicious compromise of IT systems

Risk: BSBI is operationally dependent on a range of in-house IT systems (e.g. the DDb and websites) and external service providers (e.g. Beacon, for CRM and membership). The failure, or the loss or compromise of data from these systems could disrupt core functions and activities or result in the loss of valuable, income-generating, data assets. While BSBI possesses the specialist skills and knowledge required to secure and maintain its systems, some of the processes are poorly documented, so that the loss of a few key staff could result in a loss of critical knowledge. In-house systems have been concentrated excessively on a single server, representing a potential single point of failure for multiple systems.

Mitigation: Trustees address this risk as follows: Core databases (membership and DDb) are backed up remotely and servers are in physically secure hosting facilities and protected by appropriate cyber security measures (e.g. firewalls). Bespoke software systems are designed to be secure. BSBI's third-party service providers operate secure systems that have achieved appropriate levels of security certification. The organisation is also in the process of moving its websites to separate hosting (away from the DDb server) and has plans to establish a separate server for software development work.

Fully documented disaster recovery plans are being developed by the Data Team. A Cyber Essentials exercise (a UK government-backed scheme designed to help organizations protect themselves against common cyber threats) will be undertaken in 2025, which will provide a structured way of identifying where BSBI may need to improve its security.

2) Finance - Loss of staff and services due to insufficient funding

Risk: Reduction in funding from national agencies and other donors could render BSBI unable to deliver its current activities, leading to an unhappy membership. The skills of knowledgeable and experienced employees could be lost.

Mitigation: Trustees are addressing this risk via a range of measures. Relationships are developed at operational and senior levels within all national agencies and major donors, so they know BSBI and value its work. Ties are made to the national agencies' policies and their need for open data and BSBI works with the agencies to establish longer-term strategic agreements, so that income is less restricted and more flexible. Good progress is being made against BSBI's *Income Diversification Strategy* and work continues to develop funder relationships and consolidate cross-staff engagement with income generation. As a back-up plan, Trustees consider and approve the Strategic Development Reserve to meet gaps between funding agreements.

Reserves Policy

The Board last reviewed its Reserves Policy in September 2024, and the next review will take place in Autumn 2025. This Policy sets out why BSBI holds its particular level of reserves and how the Board seeks to ensure financial sustainability.

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Over time, BSBI's income has become more diversified, with a more predictable core of income, thereby reducing overall risk in the face of one or more sources becoming vulnerable. This increasing robustness gives the comfort BSBI sought through its *Income Diversification Strategy 2020-2023*, reviewed in 2023 & extended to 2027.

In its Reserves Policy, the Board of Trustees has carefully reflected and concluded that £0.6m – equivalent to 7-8 months' operating expenditure - is an adequate and appropriate minimum level of Reserves which will help BSBI achieve a financially sustainable & resilient business model.

Meanwhile, the General Fund stood at £0.9M at 31 March 2025, (2024: £0.7M). Therefore, there is £0.3M buffer above the minimum of £0.6M. This affords the Board capacity to respond to - or seek out - opportunities. When opportunities are identified to deliver BSBI's aims even more effectively, the Board will consider designating further funds to ringfence further funds to ensure the opportunity is achieved.

Looking ahead, income diversity and therefore resilience will continue to inform BSBI's Reserves Policy.

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 leverage further funds to ensure its long-term financial sustainability. Trustees currently consider that £0.6M is the minimum acceptable level and this is periodically reviewed.
- 2) **The Strategic Development Fund:** this designated fund was created in June 2020 to fund the one-off or short-medium 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.

BSBI has maintained eleven Restricted Income Funds during the year under review, currently valued at £18,488 (2024: £32,460) Four funds were existing at the start of the year and seven were created in the year to address areas of funding needed to meet BSBI's long term aims. There is more information about what each of these funds is for in the Notes to the Accounts (Note 13).

BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND

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7. Reference and administrative details

Founded & Name	1836, as the Botanical Society of London (Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland name adopted in 2013)
Incorporation	Registered 3 June 2013 A Company Limited by Guarantee in England and Wales No. 08553976
Registered Office	MKS LLP, 4 Beaconsfield Rd, St Albans, AL1 3RD
Registered Charity	England and Wales No. 1152954 Scotland No. SC038675
Bankers	CAF Bank Ltd, Kings Hill, West Malling, ME19 4TA HSBC UK Bank plc, Birmingham, B1 1HQ Flagstone Group Ltd, 26-27 Oxendon St, SW1Y 4EL.
Investment Manager	RBC Brewin Dolphin, 12 Smithfield Street, EC1A 9BD
Auditor	MKS LLP, 4 Victoria Square, St Albans, AL1 3TF
Legal Advisers	Stone King LLP, 91 Charterhouse St, EC1M 6HR
Principal Officers	
Chair of the Board of Trustees	Dr S Knapp
Honorary Treasurer	On hold (Finance Committee covers this role)
President	Prof P Ashton (from 23 Nov 2024)
President Elect	Prof P Ashton (until 23 Nov 2024) now vacant
Honorary General Secretary	Mr B O'Kane
Company Secretary	Vacant
Chief Executive	Ms JC Hanmer
Head of Science	Dr KJ Walker
Finance Manager	Ms JE Etherington
Website	www.bsbi.org

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8. Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The Trustees (who are also the Directors for the purpose of company law) are responsible for preparing the Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations. Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law the Trustees must prepare the financial statements in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable law). Under company law the Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they 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 period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

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

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charitable company's transactions and 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 company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Statement as to disclosure of information to auditors

The Trustees confirm that so far as they are aware, there is no relevant audit information (as defined by section 418(3) of the Companies Act 2006) of which the charitable company's auditors are unaware. They have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as Trustees in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charitable company's auditors are aware of that information.

Auditors

MKS LLP Chartered Accountants were appointed auditors to the Society and a resolution proposing their reappointment will be put to the Annual General Meeting.

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

Approved by the Board of Trustees on 16th September 2025 and signed on its behalf by:



Dr S Knapp
Trustee & Chair of the Board



Miss KN Jones
Trustee & Chair of Finance Committee

BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS AND TRUSTEES OF BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of the Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland ('the charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2025 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, Balance Sheet, Statement of Cash Flows and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard Applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2025 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and regulation 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the

BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS AND TRUSTEES OF BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

course of the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' annual report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- The trustees' annual report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' annual report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies' regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemption in preparing the trustees' annual report and from preparing a strategic report.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 36, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in

BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS AND TRUSTEES OF BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs (UK) we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purposes of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the charitable company's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the trustees.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the charitable company to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Explanation as to what extent the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below.

The objectives of our audit in respect of fraud, are; to identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements due to fraud; to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the assessed risks of material misstatement due to fraud, through designing and implementing appropriate responses to those assessed risks; and to respond appropriately to instances of fraud or suspected fraud identified during the audit. However, the primary responsibility for the prevention and detection of fraud rests with both management and those charged with governance of the charitable company.

BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS AND TRUSTEES OF BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Our approach was as follows:

- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory requirements applicable to the charitable company and considered that the most significant are the Companies Act 2006, the Charities Act 2011, the Charity SORP, Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006, UK financial reporting standards as issued by the Financial Reporting Council, health and safety legislation, employment law and data protection.
- We obtained an understanding of how the charitable company complies with these requirements by discussions with management and those charged with governance.
- We assessed the risk of material misstatement of the financial statements, including the risk of material misstatement due to fraud and how it might occur, by holding discussions with management and those charged with governance.
- We inquired of management and those charged with governance as to any known instances of non-compliance or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- Based on this understanding, we designed specific appropriate audit procedures to identify instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. This included making enquiries of management and those charged with governance and obtaining additional corroborative evidence as required.

There are inherent limitations in the audit procedures described above. We are less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations that are not closely related to events and transactions reflected in the financial statements. Also, the risk of not detecting a material misstatement due to fraud is higher than the risk of not detecting one resulting from error, as fraud may involve deliberate concealment by, for example, forgery or intentional misrepresentations, or through collusion.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006 and to the charitable company's Trustees, as a body, in accordance with regulation 10 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to any party other than the charitable company and charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Moore Kingston Smith LLP

Shivani Kothari (Senior Statutory Auditor)

17 September 2025

For and on behalf of:
Moore Kingston Smith LLP
Chartered Accountants and Statutory Auditors
4 Victoria Square, St Albans, Hertfordshire AL1 3TF

BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (INCORPORATING AN INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)
For the year ended 31 March 2025

	Note	Unrestricted Funds 2025 £	Restricted Funds 2025 £	Total Funds 2025 £	Unrestricted Funds 2024 £	Restricted Funds 2024 £	Total Funds 2024 £
INCOME FROM							
Subscriptions, Donations, Grants & Legacies	2	881,668	19,655	901,323	409,392	63,917	473,309
Charitable activities	3	439,712	-	439,712	322,431	-	322,431
Investments	4	30,184	1,003	31,187	22,405	94	22,499
Total		1,351,564	20,658	1,372,222	754,228	64,011	818,239
EXPENDITURE ON							
Raising funds	5	134,451	602	135,053	137,831	-	137,831
Charitable activities	6	749,633	34,073	783,706	523,990	35,240	559,230
Total		884,084	34,675	918,759	661,821	35,240	697,061
OPERATING (DEFICIT)/SURPLUS		467,480	(14,017)	453,463	92,407	28,771	121,178
OTHER RECOGNISED (LOSSES)/GAINS							
Realised (losses)/gains on investments	9	6,152	205	6,357	(8,869)	(37)	(8,906)
Unrealised (losses)/gains on investments	9	(4,800)	(160)	(4,960)	61,913	258	62,171
Total (losses)/gains on investments		1,352	45	1,397	53,044	221	53,265
NET (EXPENDITURE)/INCOME		468,832	(13,972)	454,860	145,451	28,992	174,443
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS							
Total funds brought forward		976,408	32,460	1,008,868	830,957	3,468	834,425
Net movement in funds as above		468,832	(13,972)	454,860	145,451	28,992	174,443
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		1,445,240	18,488	1,463,728	976,408	32,460	1,008,868

BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND

BALANCE SHEET

As at 31 March 2025

	Note	2025		2024 as restated	
		£	£	£	£
Fixed Assets					
Investments	9		740,932		729,190
Current Assets					
Stocks	10	23,062		24,919	
Debtors	11	335,568		150,971	
Investments		475,000		85,000	
Cash at bank		219,649		316,293	
		1,053,279		577,183	
Liabilities					
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	12	330,483		297,505	
Net Current Assets			722,796		279,678
Net Assets			1,463,728		1,008,868
Funds					
Restricted funds	13		18,488		32,460
Unrestricted funds	14				
General Fund			870,900		716,360
Strategic Development Fund			574,340		260,048
			1,463,728		1,008,868

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 16th September 2025 and signed on its behalf by:



Dr S Knapp, Trustee &
Chair of the Board



Miss K N Jones, Trustee &
Chair of Finance Committee

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

BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

For the year ended 31 March 2025

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

For the year ended 31 March 2025

	Note	2025	2024 as restated
		£	£
Cash flows from operating activities			
Cash generated from (used in) operating activities	17	279,577	90,496
Cash generated from interest on deposits		13,779	4,768
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Net cash generated from (used in) operating activities		293,356	95,264
Cash flows from investing activities			
Proceeds from sale of investments	9	-	30,000
Purchase of Investments		(390,000)	(85,000)
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Net cash provided by investing activities		(390,000)	(55,000)
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Increase (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents in the year		(96,644)	40,264
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		316,293	276,029
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year		219,649	316,293
		<hr/>	<hr/>

Analysis of Changes in Net Debt

	At 1 April 2024 as restated £	Cashflow £	At 31 March 2025 £
Cash at Bank	316,293	(96,644)	219,649

BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

For the year ended 31 March 2025

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 (UK GAAP) 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 after 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 12 months from the date of signing the financial statements, 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 2025

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

Investment Income is recognised when earned, with dividends pending being accrued or prepaid.

Other income is recognised when received.

The Society's Vice-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.

Expenditure on Raising Funds are those costs incurred in attracting income.

Expenditure on Charitable activities comprises 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 (botanical data interpretation & access, botanical conferences, courses & education, botanical publications and website or governance costs) which cannot be allocated directly, the costs are apportioned based on estimated time spent or by other reasonable assumptions.

Grants awarded are charged in the year when the offer is given to the recipient unless the grant is conditional on a future event. 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 other similar assets is estimated at four years. Fully depreciated assets are written off.

Investments

Investments are carried in the Balance Sheet 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 2025

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 with a short maturity of 3 months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

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 Society currently transacts in Euros € and US Dollars \$.

Taxation

The Society is recognised as a Charity by HMRC, and its activities therefore support its primary purpose of delivering its stated charitable objectives. This means 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 made to BSBI by a member or donor. The Society receives no similar exemption in respect of Value Added Tax (VAT). Income and Expenditure is reported net of VAT and irrecoverable VAT is reported as an expense.

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 restrictions were established by the original donor(s) as to what type of expenditure was permitted.

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 2025

2. SUBSCRIPTIONS, DONATIONS, GRANTS & LEGACIES	2025	2024
	£	£
Membership Subscriptions (including associated Gift Aid)	172,826	162,700
Unrestricted Donations (including Gift Aid) and sundry income	16,091	131,044
Unrestricted Grants	241,480	113,166
Unrestricted Legacies	451,271	2,482
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total Unrestricted Fund income	881,668	409,392
Restricted Donations (including Gift Aid) and sundry income	2,655	46,417
Restricted Grants	17,000	10,000
Restricted Legacies	-	7,500
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total Restricted Fund income	19,655	63,917
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	901,323	473,309
	<hr/>	<hr/>
3. INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES		
Botanical data interpretation & access delivery	266,877	196,068
Botanical conferences, courses and education	155,147	99,109
Botanical publications	14,866	17,598
Royalties	2,822	9,656
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	439,712	322,431
	<hr/>	<hr/>
4. INCOME FROM INVESTMENTS		
Investment income (Restricted £1,003 (2024 - £94))	17,408	17,731
Bank deposit interest	13,779	4,768
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	31,187	22,499
	<hr/>	<hr/>
5. EXPENDITURE ON RAISING FUNDS		
Staff & Other Costs of Membership & Communications	47,014	45,480
Direct Costs of Member publications (Restricted £602 (2024 - £NIL))	39,755	39,907
Staff & Other Costs of Fundraising for Donations, Grants & Legacies	34,230	38,773
Publicity	989	1,896
Investment management costs & finance charges	13,065	11,775
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	135,053	137,831
	<hr/>	<hr/>

BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (continued)

For the year ended 31 March 2025

6. EXPENDITURE ON CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES	2025 £	2024 £
Botanical Data Interpretation & Access and Grant Delivery		
Direct Staff & Other Costs (Restricted £27,000 (2024 £25,000))	400,133	322,406
Support Staff & Other Costs (Note a)	89,914	54,756
Grants awarded for scientific work (Restricted £468 (2024 £240))	<u>1,953</u>	<u>1,844</u>
	<u>492,000</u>	<u>379,006</u>
Botanical Conferences, Courses and Education		
Direct Costs of Conferences and courses	87,443	42,895
Staff Costs (Restricted £6,605 (2024 £10,000)) (Note a)	74,371	25,431
Grants awarded for training and education	<u>7,907</u>	<u>4,984</u>
	<u>169,721</u>	<u>73,310</u>
Botanical Publications		
Cost of publication sales	4,919	7,314
Staff Costs (Note a)	4,559	-
Grants awarded for botanical publications	<u>750</u>	<u>2,500</u>
	<u>10,228</u>	<u>9,814</u>
Governance		
Strategy Implementation Costs	-	851
Trustee indemnity insurance	1,493	1,117
Staff Costs	61,659	63,954
Audit fees	10,250	9,750
Professional & HR advice, Payroll & Accounting (Note b)	21,740	5,664
Committee costs and expenses	6,092	2,287
Increase / (decrease) in accrued holiday pay	2,930	848
Recruitment, Training & other governance costs	<u>7,593</u>	<u>12,529</u>
	<u>111,757</u>	<u>97,100</u>
Total (Restricted £34,073 (2024 £35,240))	<u>783,706</u>	<u>559,230</u>

Note a – Costs reflect improvements in the accuracy of how staff time is spent

Note b - Includes fees of £3,303 (2024: £1,910) for MKS LLP non-audit services. See Section 4 of the Annual Report for further information.

The Society awards three types of grants, each after due consideration by different committees:

- 1) **Grants for scientific or research work;** those with potentially publishable results are normally up to £1,000.
- 2) **Grants for training and education;** these are normally up to £250 and are given towards relevant and appropriate third-party courses. 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. Identiplant training grants are also given to a small number of students to cover the study cost, currently at £250 (see Note 16)
- 3) **Grants for botanical publications,** normally up to £1,000 for county Floras written by BSBI members.

In total, 36 individuals (2024: 22) claimed grants in the year and the total value of grants disbursed in the year was £10,610 (2024: £9,328). The individual grants were awarded based on applications made by individuals as described above.

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 2025

7. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

Neither the Society's President, President Elect, nor Trustees received remuneration from BSBI 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 thought to be similar to the amount 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 £822 (2024: £837) were reimbursed to 3 (2024: 4) trustees who made expense claims for reimbursement of out-of-pocket travel, subsistence and other costs, of which, £50 (2024: £94) is outstanding at the year end.

Under BSBI's Articles of Association 3.4.1, all Trustees must be BSBI members and therefore each person pays an annual subscription at the relevant rate, currently £39pa or €45pa

In addition to giving time to BSBI to fulfil their various roles, Trustees also purchased tickets to attend BSBI events totalling £304 (2024: £NIL) and gave donations totalling £298 (2024: £698) to BSBI during the year, either personally or through their companies

Dr S Knapp, Trustee, is employed as Head of the Algae, Fungi and Plants Division by The Natural History Museum (NHM). During the year, NHM gave BSBI free of charge meeting space at the Angela Marmont Centre for UK Nature, within the NHM, for two meetings in 2024. Also, in November 2024, it supplied a meeting room and its Flett Theatre facilities free of charge for BSBI's British & Irish Botanical Conference; a total of three occasions (2024: two occasions). Dr Knapp is also a Scientific Associate at Royal Botanic Gardens Kew and, during the year, BSBI received £1,750 income (2024: £825) from this organisation for access granted to BSBI's plant database.

Professor P Ashton, President from 23 November 2024, is Professor of Botany with teaching and research responsibilities at Edge Hill University (EHU) in Lancashire. BSBI provides EHU with access to its database in exchange for EHU resources such as e-journals.

Dr HJ Crouch, Trustee, was engaged in 2025 for as a contractor to National Trust for 0 days survey work (2024: 3 days). During the year, BSBI received £3,750 income (2024: £6,500) from National Trust in respect of data and other work to support its Conservation Strategy, of which £3,750 (+ VAT) was outstanding at year end (2024: £NIL)

Mr AD Thomas, Trustee until 16 May 2024, is Honorary Vice-President of Field Studies Council (FSC). During the year, BSBI paid FSC £5,392 (2024: £9,995) for the provision of accommodation, catering and meeting facilities for BSBI member and other events held at FSC field centres, of which £70 was outstanding at year end (2024: £NIL). BSBI also received £11,400 income (2024: £6,525) from FSC in respect of advertising space taken in BSBI News and FISC fees, of which £225 was outstanding at year end (2024: £NIL)

Dr T Dines is an author engaged under contract by Bloomsbury Press, the publisher of the *British Wildlife Collection*. Bloomsbury has agreed to collaborate with and promote BSBI in its book "Harrap's Wildflowers, Second edition". BSBI has promoted and offered BSBI members 25% discount on Dr Dines' book *Urban Plants* published by Bloomsbury on 5 June 2025.

Prof Pete Hollingsworth, Trustee, is Director of Science and Deputy Keeper at Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE). During the year, BSBI paid RBGE £350 for costs associated with BSBI events

BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (continued)

For the year ended 31 March 2025

held there (2024: £5,208). RBGE also provides free of charge services for other BSBI events and office facilities used by BSBI's Scotland Officer.

Dr M Long, Trustee, is employed as an Ecologist for Conservation Planning and Grasslands within the Scientific Advice and Research Directorate of National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS). During the year, BSBI received grants of £45,190 (2024: £50,391); the £ equivalent of € denominated grants, from NPWS for BSBI's Ireland Officer, for the Targeted Aquatic Plant Project. In earlier years, Dr Long has been the key contact in arranging grant funding to BSBI for the "Irish Grasslands Project". The equivalent of £6,885 was outstanding at year end (2024: £NIL).

Employees Ms JC Hanmer (Chief Executive) and Dr KJ Walker (Head of Science) received remuneration during the year earned in their respective roles. Also, amounts totalling £7,455 (2024: £7,398) were reimbursed to these employees for of travel, subsistence and other costs, of which, £431 (2024: £1,222) is outstanding at the year end.

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 £195,280 from NE (2024: £133,866) for the collection, verification & sharing of vascular plant data in England and the interpretation of this data to facilitate delivery of NE's statutory duties. £NIL (2024: £55,424) is outstanding at the year end. Also, Dr Walker is a Fellow of UKCEH, through which he is allowed to use facilities at UKCEH Wallingford to facilitate research. BSBI reported income of £11,250 (2024: £9,000) from UKCEH during the year under a three-year contract to deliver information re non-native plant species, of which £6,780 (2024: £5,400) is outstanding at the year end.

BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (continued)

For the year ended 31 March 2025

8. STAFF COSTS	2025	2024
	£	£
Salaries	558,490	448,697
Social Security costs	52,733	40,466
Pension costs	21,904	18,345
Increase / (decrease) in accrued holiday pay	2,930	848
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total staff costs	636,057	508,356
	<hr/>	<hr/>

The average number of employees during the year was 16 (2024: 13). At the reporting date there were 16 employees (2024: 14) of which, one (2024: one) was resident in Republic of Ireland, equivalent to 14 full time posts (2024: 12)

One employee earned more than an annual equivalent of £60,000 during the year (2024: nil).

Key Management Personnel

The Trustees consider two members of staff to be Key Management Personnel: the Chief Executive and Head of Science. Their combined gross salaries, social security costs and employer's pension contributions constituted 21% (2024: 26%) of the total above.

	2025	2024
	£	£
Total Remuneration	135,503	130,006

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 minimum required rate set by the Pensions Regulator, currently 8%. Also, a standard Personal Retirement Savings Account (PRSA) is offered to BSBI's employees in Ireland into which BSBI contributes the same % as UK based employees.

No taxable employee benefits were paid during the year (2024: £NIL).

9. INVESTMENTS	2025	2024
	£	£
At Market Value		
At the beginning of the year	729,190	694,839
Investment income retained	17,408	17,731
Investment management charges deducted	(7,063)	(6,645)
Transfers to bank current account	-	(30,000)
Realised (loss)/gain in the year	6,357	(8,906)
Unrealised (loss)/gain in the year	(4,960)	62,171
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Market value at the end of the year	740,932	729,190
	<hr/>	<hr/>

BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (continued)

For the year ended 31 March 2025

At Original Cost	681,805	664,479
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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:

	2025	2024
Equities - UK	17.2%	18.7%
Equities - Overseas	46.9%	49.6%
Bonds	17.2%	16.7%
Global Investments	5.6%	1.1%
Property	3.2%	2.7%
Private Equity	2.2%	2.6%
Other	6.1%	5.1%
Cash	1.6%	3.5%
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	100.0%	100.0%
	<hr/>	<hr/>

10. STOCKS AND WORK IN PROGRESS

Botanical publications	23,062	24,919
	<hr/>	<hr/>

Stocks of publications are held by BSBI's sales agent, Summerfield Books (2007) Ltd. Provision is made for slow-moving stocks; £3,816 (2024: £4,883). Sales proceeds are shown in note 3

11. DEBTORS

Debtors	30,697	75,222
Accrued income	279,326	46,492
Prepayments	25,545	29,257
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total debtors	335,568	150,971
	<hr/>	<hr/>

The decrease in Debtors is substantially down to a single customer paying a £55k debt a few days after 31 March 2024, whereas the same customer's similarly timed invoices were paid a few days before 31 March 2025. The increase in Accrued Income is explained by legacy income of £0.2M not yet paid to BSBI by the Executors at 31 March 2025.

BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (continued)

For the year ended 31 March 2025

12. CREDITORS

	2025 £	2024 £
Amounts falling due within one year		
Creditors	14,779	9,759
Taxation and social security	31,923	37,548
Pensions	4,496	4,736
Holiday pay accrual	13,090	10,160
Other accrued expenses	16,613	18,545
Deferred income	249,582	216,757
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total Creditors	330,483	297,505
	<hr/>	<hr/>

£106,692 Deferred income (2024: £102,520) relates to subscriptions for 2025, therefore the 75% relating to the nine months of the calendar year after the balance sheet date are deferred.

Deferred income also arises from grant, contract or publication income and from advance bookings for field meetings and conferences.

Brought Forward	216,757	155,649
Added during the year	283,718	263,105
Released during the year	(250,893)	(201,997)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Carried forward	249,582	216,757

13. RESTRICTED FUNDS

	1 April 2023 £	Investment Gains/(losses) £	Income £	Expenditure £	31 Mar 2024 £
Presidents' Award	2,211	141	60	(240)	2,172
Welsh Flora	1,257	80	34	-	1,371
Scottish Officer	-	-	22,000	(22,000)	-
Botanical Training	-	-	26,043	(10,000)	16,043
Support for Recorders	-	-	12,874	-	12,874
Holy Grass Project	-	-	3,000	(3,000)	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	3,468	221	64,011	(35,240)	32,460

	1 April 2024				31 Mar 2025
Presidents' Award	2,172	3	67	(300)	1,942
Welsh Flora Fund	1,371	2	42	(168)	1,247
Botanical Training	16,043	22	1,009	(6,605)	10,469
Support for Recorders	12,874	18	678	(10,000)	3,570

BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (continued)

For the year ended 31 March 2025

Botanical Engagement	-	-	15,112	(15,000)	112
Wales	-	-	2,050	(2,000)	50
Scotland	-	-	120	-	120
England	-	-	86	-	86
All Ireland	-	-	5	-	5
Science & Data	-	-	60	-	60
Hardship	-	-	1,429	(602)	827
Total	32,460	45	20,658	(34,675)	18,488

Where the fund is sourced from an external grant, it shares in investment gains and losses unless prohibited under the terms of the grant. Funds are held as shown in note 14.

The **Presidents' Award** is an expendable fund, providing an award of £300pa to individual(s) selected by the Presidents of BSBI and the Wild Flower Society for outstanding contributions to botany. In 2024, it was awarded to Paul Green for his book *Flora of Wexford*.

The **Welsh Flora** fund provides funding for botanical publications relating to North Wales. There was one disbursement of £168 in 2025 (2024: £NIL) for travel expenses relating to the Menai Strait whitebeam *Sorbus arvonicola* in Caernarvonshire (VC49) and Anglesey (VC52)

The **Scottish Officer** fund received £22,000 income in 2023/24 which was donated specifically towards the employment costs of the Scotland Officer. The remaining costs of this post were met by grant funding. The fund was fully expended and closed by 31 March 2024

The **Botanical Training Fund** was established out of a successful fundraising campaign begun in 2023 & focused on expanding BSBI's Identiplant and FISC training into Ireland and Scotland which has allowed £6,605 (2024: £10,000) to be used towards the associated pay costs of BSBI's Training Co-ordinator. Fundraising continues and monies are invested to meet future expenditure in pursuit of its aims.

The **Support for Recorders Fund** has four aims: to fund the work of BSBI staff to:

- Develop new and emergent Recorders through support, training and mentorship
- Provide training and trainer opportunities for all Recorders
- Ensure BSBI's software and database support Recorders' needs, and that there is training, physical equipment and help available for their use.
- Advance projects that make a meaningful contribution to botanical conservation through science and data collection

Funds received for this purpose has allowed it to meet the cost of the Countries Manager's time devoted to these aims. Donations have continued during 2024/25 & fundraising is ongoing, with monies invested to meet future expenditure in pursuit of these aims.

The **Holy Grass Project** fund was created by a £3,000 donation to meet the expenditure of a joint project between BSBI and Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE) looking at the genetics of *Hierochloe odorata* (Holy-grass) across its disjunct populations in Britain and Scandinavia. The £3,500 project costs were also met by a BSBI Science & Research grant of £500 in 2023/24.

BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (continued)

For the year ended 31 March 2025

Seven new funds were established in the year:

The **Botanical Engagement** fund is used to support public engagement projects, such as the New Year Plant Hunt, and other outreach activities that raise the profile of the Society and botany.

The separate **Wales, Scotland, England** and **All Ireland** funds are designed to meet expenditure relating to BSBI's activities in each of those four respective countries / areas.

The **Science & Data** fund is to meet expenditure relating to science and data activities, including data management, recording activities and incidental science project costs not met by other funding, e.g. BSBI's Wildflower Hunt.

The **Hardship** fund helps members remain members in the event of unforeseen financial difficulty. Members may apply to BSBI for the cost of part or all of one year's membership at their existing rate to be waived. Awards are assessed on a case-by-case basis. <https://bsbi.org/hardship-fund>

14. UNRESTRICTED FUNDS

	2025 £	2024 £
General Fund		
At the beginning of the year	716,360	670,351
Incoming resources	1,343,524	749,897
Resources expended	(850,706)	(629,680)
Investment (losses)/gains	993	42,792
Designated to Strategic Development Fund	(339,271)	(117,000)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
At the end of the year	870,900	716,360
	<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.

	2025 £	2024 £
Strategic Development Fund		
At the beginning of the year	260,048	160,606
Resources expended	(33,378)	(32,142)
Investment Income	8,039	4,332
Investment (losses)/gains	360	10,252
Designated from General Fund	339,271	117,000
	<hr/>	<hr/>
At the end of the year	574,340	260,048
	<hr/>	<hr/>

The purpose of the Strategic Development Fund is to meet expenditure designed to deliver BSBI's Strategy designed to place BSBI on a long-term financially sustainable footing.

BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (continued)

For the year ended 31 March 2025

15. ALLOCATION OF FUNDS

	Investments £	Other Net Assets £	Total £
As at 31 March 2025:			
Restricted Income Funds			
Presidents' Award	1,942	-	1,942
Welsh Flora	1,247	-	1,247
Botanical Training	-	10,469	10,469
Support for Recorders	-	3,570	3,570
Botanical Engagement	-	112	112
Wales	-	50	50
Scotland	-	120	120
England	-	86	86
All Ireland	-	5	5
Science & Data	-	60	60
Hardship	-	827	827
Unrestricted Income Funds			
General Fund	577,137	293,763	870,900
Strategic Development Fund	160,606	413,734	574,340
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	740,932	722,796	1,463,728
As at 31 March 2024:			
Restricted Income Funds			
Presidents' Award	2,172	-	2,172
Welsh Flora	1,371	-	1,371
Scottish Officer	-	-	-
Scottish Training Programme	-	-	-
Botanical Training	-	16,043	16,043
Support for Recorders	-	12,874	12,874
Holy Grass Project	-	-	-
Unrestricted Income Funds			
General Fund	565,041	151,319	716,360
Strategic Development Fund	160,606	99,442	260,048
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	729,190	279,678	1,008,868

16. COMMITMENTS

As at 31 March 2025, The Society had commitments to 43 training and research grants awarded in Spring 2025, totalling £14,043 (2024: 35 grants, £9,987). There were no Flora grant commitments (2024: One grant, £250). Grants for external training are normally paid after the completion of the training course or research. Grants payable accrued at year end are excluded from commitments.

There are three office leases. Two in Harrogate; one for the Head of Science's office, the other for BSBI archives. These leases expired in 2022 & 2023 respectively and the premises are now occupied on a rolling lease basis without a contractual commitment to a fixed end date. The third lease is for office space at Cambridge University Botanic Gardens for BSBI's Scientific Officer. Notice was served on 21 February 2025 prior to the Scientific Officer's relocation and the lease and any further commitment ended on 21 April 2025. The total non-cancellable commitment under the Harrogate leases is calculated at 1 month for each lease, amounting to £271 (2024: £571).

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

BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (continued)

For the year ended 31 March 2025

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

	2025	2024
	£	£
Net income / (expenditure) for the year	454,860	174,443
Adjustments for:		
Losses / (gains) on investments	(1,397)	(53,265)
Dividends and interest from investments and deposits	(31,187)	(22,498)
Investment management charges	7,063	6,644
(Increase) / decrease in stocks	1,857	2,043
(Increase) / decrease in debtors	(184,597)	(88,409)
Increase / (decrease) in creditors	32,978	71,538
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Net Cash inflow/(outflow) generated by/ (used in) operating activities	279,577	90,496

18. PRIOR YEAR ADJUSTMENT

Under Current Assets, the comparatives have been restated to show £85,000 of Cash at Bank as Investments as these balances have a maturity of more than 3 months from inception.