

**Annual Return to the Charities Commission -
Trustees' Annual Report and Accounts
For the Year Ending 31 January 2023**



Charitable Incorporated Organisation Name:

Natural Sciences Collections Association (NatSCA)

Registration Number:

1186918

Address:

c/o Yvette Harvey, NatSCA Secretary

Royal Horticultural Society

RHS Garden Wisley

Woking, Surrey

GU23 6QB

Trustees in post for the period 1 February 2022 to 31 January 2023:

Jack Ashby

Clare Brown

Annabelle Buchanan-Smith (co-opted by board 31 October 2022)

Tannis Davidson (appointed at AGM 7 June 2022)

Patti Wood Finkle (appointed at AGM 7 June 2022)

Jan Freedman

Jen Gallichan (re-appointed at AGM 7 June 2022)

David Gelsthorpe

Amy Geraghty (appointed at AGM 7 June 2022)

Isla Gladstone

Yvette Harvey

Lucie Mascord

Laura McCoy

Holly Morgenroth (retired at AGM 7 June 2022)

Bethany Palumbo (retired at AGM 7 June 2022)

Glenn Roadley

Laura Soul

Paolo Viscardi (retired at AGM 7 June 2022)

Donna Young (retired at AGM 7 June 2022)

Structure & Governance:

NatSCA is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation run by elected volunteer trustees from its membership. NatSCA is managed according to a Constitution of a Charitable Incorporated Organisation with voting members other than its charity trustees. This states that NatSCA must have a minimum of nine and maximum of 15 trustees. Named trustee roles to ensure key functions operate are Chair or Co-Chair, Secretary, Membership Secretary, Treasurer, Editor. Ordinary member trustees support NatSCA's delivery of training, conference, social media and online blog, website, advocacy, conservation, awards, and bursaries.

At every AGM one-third (or number nearest to one-third if not a multiple of three) of the trustees retire by rotation according to those who have been longest in office. Vacancies are advertised to the membership and wider NatSCA community through our website, email lists and social media channels, and filled by decision of the members at the AGM.

Annual Activities and Objectives:

NatSCA supports natural science collections and the people who work with them, to improve care, access, and enjoyment for all. We are UK-based but welcome international members and users.

NatSCA's objectives are to:

- (1) to advance the education of the public in the care and use of natural sciences collections and specimens.
- (2) to promote for the benefit of the public the highest standards in the preparation, care, conservation, management, interpretation and research of natural sciences collections and specimens.
- (3) For the benefit of the public to promote the science of natural sciences collections conservation and curation.

These are achieved through a combination of; training workshops, seminars & conferences; peer-reviewed journal; networking opportunities; website & sector resources; member bursaries; member project grants; advocacy.

NatSCA's achievements and performance 1 February 2022 to 31 January 2023:

The following report is compiled from an extract of the Annual General Meeting of the Natural Sciences Collections Association (NatSCA) held on 27 April 2023 and additional commentary, where relevant. At the AGM the trustee annual reports detailing what has been achieved by NatSCA for public benefit were presented to our members. Minutes and annual reports from NatSCA's AGMs are also published in print and online in our Journal of Natural Science Collections.

The **Annual Accounts** included below in the Treasurer's report and were approved for signature at the AGM.

Secretary's Report: Yvette Harvey

Seven Zoom committee meetings and one hybrid (October) have been held between February 2022 and January 2023. October 2022's meeting included a special vote (in accordance with NatSCA's constitution) for a Treasurer.

Trustees have faced challenges at work and home over the past year, affecting meeting attendance. Please see below (- denotes special leave and grey denotes a non-Trustee period):

	ii.'22	iii.'22	iv.'22	v.'22	vii.'22	x.'22	xii.'22	i.'23
Jack Ashby	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y
Clare Brown		y			y			y
Belle Buchanan-Smith							y	y
Tannis Davidson						y		y
Patti Wood Finkle					y	y	y	y
Jan Freedman	y		y	y		y		
Jennifer Gallichan	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y
David Gelsthorpe	y		y		y			
Amy Geraghty					y		y	y
Isla Gladstone		y	y	y	y	y		y
Yvette Harvey	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y
Lucie Mascord		y		y	y			
Laura McCoy	y	y		y	y	y	y	y
Holly Morgenroth	y			y				
Bethany Palumbo		y	y	y				
Glenn Roadley	y	y		y	y	y	y	y
Laura Soul	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y
Paolo Viscardi	y		y					
Donna Young	-	-	-	-				
Total No. present	10	10	9	11	12	10	9	12

Treasurer's Report: Belle Buchanan-Smith:

Accounts summary 01.02.2022 - 31.01.2023									
Income		2022-23		2021-22	Expenditure		2022-23		2021-22
Institutional Subscriptions					Running costs				
Previous Years	£ -			£ 200	Committee Expenses		£ (333)		£ (95)
Current Year (bank)	£ 1,880			£ 1,938	Website, Zoom etc		£ (815)		£ (1,187)
Future Years	£ 40				Stationery				£
		£ 1,920		£ 2,138	Postage		£ -		£ (22)
Personal Subscriptions					Payment Fees		£ (141)		£ -
Previous Years	£ 20			£ 20	Data Protection		£ (35)		£ (35)
Current Year	£ 4,475			£ 5,455			£ (1,323)	£ (1,339)	
Wrong amount	£ -			£ 30	Workshops				
Future Years	£ 150								
		£ 4,645		£ 5,505					
Workshop Income							£ -		
					Conference				
					SPNHC		£ (53)		
							£ (53)		
		£ -			Publications & Information Provision				
Conference Income					2020 Journal print & postage				£ (1,592)
					2021 Journal print & postage		£ (2,174)		
2021	£ -			£ 240			£ (2,174)	£ (1,592)	
		£ -		£ 240	Charitable				
Donations					Bill Pettit Fund		£ (2,528)		£ (4,510)
Donations	£ -			£ 44	Bursaries		£ (1,504)		
		£ -		£ 44	Sector support		£ -		
Other							£ (4,032)	£ 4,510	
Misc.	£ -				Other				
Publications	£ 12								
Bank interest									
Unallocated	£ -								
		£ 12		£ -					
TOTAL INCOME		£ 6,577		£ 7,927	TOTAL EXPENDITURE		£ (7,583)	£ (7,441)	
							2022-23	2021-22	
Cash (Deficit) / Surplus for the Year							£ (1,006)	£ 486	

Comments on Year End Accounts from Treasurer:

- The reduction in Subscription income is a result of the slight drop in membership numbers.

- The 2022/23 Conference was run with SPNHC so no income and only a small cost recognised.
- In 2023/24 a full conference will run with both online and in person delegates so increases in income and expenditure are expected.
- No new Bill Petit Grants committed to in the 2022/23 year.
- Prior year commitments paid, with exception of Bill Petit - Teeth KCL 2020 - Invoice received March 2023.
- Bursaries offered for the conference, no comparable spend in prior year.
- Running Costs are consistent in total; in person meetings have increased committee travel spend and decreased web provision costs.
- Reserves levels are currently healthy, sufficient to cover around 3 years of pre-COVID level expenditure.
- *As a result, the small deficit for the current year is not considered a threat to the going concern of the CIO.*

Cash Flow Statement				OUTSTANDING EXPENDITURE		
01.02.2022	Current a/c	£ 48,791		2022 Journal Estimate	£ 2,000	
	Paypal a/c			BP 2020 - Teeth KCL	£ 2,100	
			£ 48,791			£ 4,100
02.01.2023	Current a/c	£ 47,785		EXPECTED INCOME		
	Paypal a/c					
			£ 47,785.36			
Balance Including Liabilities			£ 43,685			£ -
Adjusted Surplus/(Deficit)			£ (5,106)	Estimated adjusted balance 31.01.2023		£ 47,785

Reserve Policy – Post AGM note:

NatSCA has been cautious in use of reserves over the past 2 years, during and following the COVID-19 pandemic. Prior to this period the CIO general reserves were increasing year on year, largely due to consistent membership levels and good turnout at the annual conference. The trustees have reviewed the level of reserves required, based on spending commitments and timings, and consider that reserves in the region of £20,000 would be sufficient to ensure a secure basis for the continued operation of the charity and delivery of objectives.

Current reserve levels are more than twice this level and the board are working on plans to utilise excess funds to the benefit of members and the wider Natural Sciences Collections community. Initial plans over the next 3 years include:

- (a) Improvement of the online offering via the NatSCA website and resources.
- (b) Increasing training and workshops to pre-pandemic levels or above.
- (c) Offering additional support in the form of bursaries and subsidised attendance fees to assist with the cost-of-living crisis, and low training budgets.

The board will review reserve levels a minimum of 6 monthly, to monitor available budget for opportunities for additional areas of work, member and public support, and advocacy across the sector.





CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Charity Name:				No:	CC16a
Natural Sciences Collections Association (NatSCA)				1186918	
Receipts and payments accounts					
For the period from	Period start date	To	Period end date		
	01/02/2022		31/01/2023		
Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Last year	
to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	
1,920	-	-	1,920	2,138	
4,645	-	-	4,645	5,505	
-	-	-	-	-	
-	-	-	-	240	
-	-	-	-	44	
12	-	-	12	-	
-	-	-	-	-	
-	-	-	-	-	
6,577	-	-	6,577	7,927	
-	-	-	-	-	
-	-	-	-	-	
6,577	-	-	6,577	7,927	
1,324	-	-	1,324	1,339	
-	-	-	-	-	
53	-	-	53	-	
2,174	-	-	2,174	1,592	
2,038	490	-	2,528	4,510	
1,504	-	-	1,504	-	
7,093	490	-	7,583	7,441	
-	-	-	-	-	
-	-	-	-	-	
7,093	490	-	7,583	7,441	
- 516	- 490	-	- 1,006	486	
-	-	-	-	-	
48,301	490	-	48,791	48,305	
47,785	-	-	47,785	48,791	

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds
		to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Current Account	47,785	-	-
	PayPal	-	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	47,785	-	-
(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))		OK	OK	OK
		Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds
	Details	to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B3 Investment assets			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
B5 Liabilities	Journal 2022	Unrestricted	2,000	
	Bill Petit 2022	Unrestricted	-	
	Bill Petit 2020	Restricted	2,100	
			-	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
	Isla Gladstone (Chair)	27 April 2023
	Annabelle Buchanan-Smith (Treasurer)	27 April 2023

Membership Secretary's Report: Clare Brown

1st February 2022 - 31st January 2023

For 2022 the membership statistics are as follows:

- 296 members (55 institutional, 241 personal), this is 38 fewer members than 2021-22.
- Around 80% of our membership is UK based, we also have members in 19 other countries.
- 123 members chose to receive a hardcopy of the journal.
- There were 13 free/complimentary mailings of the journal either for legal/copyright reasons or networking (British Library LDO, British Library CRO, GCG, Smithsonian Institute Library Gift and Exchanges, ACE, SPNHC, MA, Zoological Record, plus five copies to Agency for the Legal Deposit Libraries).

Membership numbers have dropped slightly from 2021. This is likely to be linked to NatSCA's reduced post-COVID programme. However, it may also reflect the increasing cost of living problem and the stress on institutional resources. We hope membership numbers will increase again as our programme picks up with an in person NatSCA-led conference in April 2023 and planned training events for the year. We are aware of the need to understand any continued drop in numbers beyond this.

I would like to thank everyone who has supported me with the membership work over the last year, Holly Morgenroth, Glenn Roadley and Justine Aw in particular.

Editor's Report: Jan Freedman

We have had a lot of really interesting articles submitted for Volume 11 of the *Journal of Natural Science Collections*, covering a range of topics from decolonisation, conservation, collections research, and learning and outreach.

Volume 11 is online and available in print for those members who requested the hard copy version (<https://www.natsca.org/jonsc-vol-11>). The first two articles, Colonial entanglement in extinction narratives: the afterlives of two Saint Lucia giant Rice rats, and Promises of mass digitisation and the colonial realities of natural history collection, are available free for non-members, as part of NatSCA's aim to make all decolonising articles accessible to the wider museum community.

There was a small delay in the completion of Volume 11, unfortunately due to a restructure in a museum, but I'm pleased to say that our colleagues were not affected.

As always, I would like to thank all the authors for their submissions, and all their hard work and time that they put into their original article and subsequent revisions. I would also like to thank all the reviewers who spend time to go through each article and provide positive and constructive feedback to improve the quality of the articles. And finally, a special thanks to our Editorial Board, Bethany Palumbo, Paolo Viscardi and Rob Huxley, who take the time to coordinate finding peer reviewers.

We are looking for two volunteers to join the Editorial Board. Being on the Editorial Board is an important part in the article review process. Members of the board will receive an article that has been submitted, and then reach out to find two reviewers. They are the contact for the reviewers, and return reviewed articles back to the Editor. The process helps by finding a large range of specialist reviewers that one person alone cannot do. The role involves good written communication skills, and is a great way to network with other experts in the sector. If you are interested, please contact me at Editor@natsca.org.

The deadline for the next Journal is the end of July 2023, and if you are interested in submitting an article, please feel free to contact me for any information.

Chair's Report: Isla Gladstone

2022 has marked NatSCA's first return to in person activity since the Covid-19 pandemic. We have offered professional development and networking opportunities through a hybrid conference and programme of virtual talks. We have continued our digital and physical publications, with a steady flow of readership and increased diversity of contributors to our blog. The NatSCA trustees have also continued to review our operating model in the context of low sector resources and increasing cost of living, including a significant increase to our bursary offer. Additional priorities developed during this year for 2023 include trialling new volunteer positions and links to wider networks to help increase our capacity to deliver for, represent and support the NatSCA community.

Conference lead 2022, Glenn Roadley, reports that our first physical conference post-lockdown took place in Edinburgh in June 2022, in partnership with the Society for the Preservation of Natural History Collections (SPNHC) and Biodiversity Heritage Library (BHL). The conference was well attended, with 12 NatSCA members being granted bursaries to support attendance (10 physical and 2 digital). NatSCA hosted two symposia at the conference: One closed (*'Civically engaged natural history museums: transforming public programmes to stay relevant'*) and one open (*'Long Time No See'*). NatSCA's AGM was also held as part of the conference.

In January 2023, NatSCA circulated a Call for Papers and Save the Date for the 2023 conference: 'So how do we actually do all this? Hopeful futures and turning theory into practice for big issues in natural history collections', to be hosted by The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent. Twenty six papers were received and all were accepted. Due to increased costs, the decision was made to increase registration fees, however the amount made available to cover speaker expenses and bursaries was also increased.

Our **training** leads Laura McCoy and Laura Soul have continued to deliver our regular Lunchtime Chats series, on the last Thursday of each month. These provide an informal opportunity for members to share topics of professional interest with our subject specialist network. Talks this year have ranged from an update on Bill Pettit funded project 'Marvellous Molluscs', to approaches to skeletal preparation and conservation at Natural History Museum of Denmark, to how to mitigate specimen freezer burn. Please do get in touch with training@natsca.org if you have an idea for a future Chat. We are also working towards

returning to our pre-pandemic training programme of one skills-based and one seminar-based event per year, now with the added benefit of virtual delivery options.

Blog Editor Jen Gallichan reports steady engagement from across the sector, with an increase in blogs submitted from non-committee sources. This is partly due to blog articles being offered on receipt of bursaries, and partly because of an increased rate of successful submissions from call outs on the NatSCA Jiscmail. The 2023 blog calendar is currently filled until June.

Visits to blog page per month

Month	Visits	Views
February	1043	1551
March	1452	2047
April	1079	1547
May	1112	1767
June	1197	1679
July	973	1461
August	1067	1644
September	1619	1159
October	1196	1804
November	1254	1873
December	1306	1690
January	4273	3455
February	1239	1685
TOTAL for PERIOD	18810	23362
% Increase vs Feb 2021 - Jan 22	+26%	+8%

The highest number of visitors come from the UK, although we are attracting visitors from our colleagues in the USA, Australia, and parts of Europe. The table below shows a drop in numbers apart from a large spike in January 2023 from the USA and a welcome return of visitors from Italy who had not recorded views on the blog since 2017.

Country	Views	% Change vs 2020
UK	7962	-17
USA	6894	+24
Australia	466	-36
Ireland	461	-17
Germany	423	-1.5
India	386	-15
Canada	372	-18
France	338	-39
Italy	297	+100

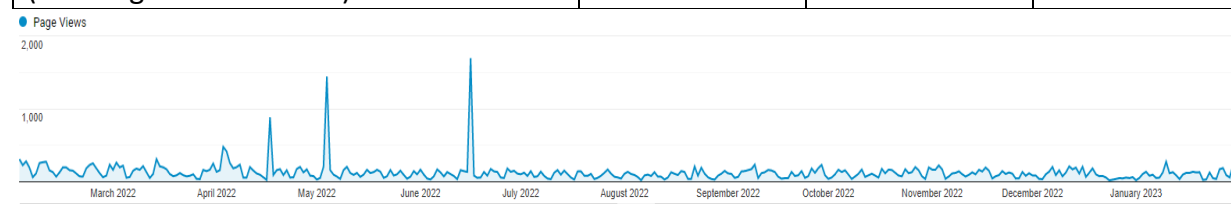
A total of 42 articles were posted. The top, most viewed blogs covered a range of new and old articles, showing that they have longevity and remain relevant to readers for a long period after they are posted.

Post
Private Bone Collections: The Good, The Bad and The Illegal
Giant Sequoia at The Natural History Museum
Telling The Truth About Who Really Collected The 'Hero Collections'
Freezing Specimens and how to Mitigate Freezer Burn
Resurrection 101
The SS Great Britain's 'Final Passenger'
Frequently Asked Questions in Taxidermy
Brendel Plant Model Survey
'Marvellous Molluscs' – Increasing accessibility, improving storage & unlocking research potential at the University of Aberdeen
Collecting with Lao Chao [Zhao Chengzhang]: Decolonising the Collecting Trips of George Forrest

NatSCA **Website** lead Glenn Roadley reports fairly consistent traffic across the period, with generally higher traffic early in the year. There were a few spikes in traffic around April 17th, May 4th and June 16th. Overall figures for the year are down 25-30% on the same period last year, bringing total users in line with 2020-2021 following last year's increases.

Visits to website per month

Month	Sessions	Users	Page Views
February	2,199	1,690	4,800
March	2,146	1,611	4,409
April	2,545	1,968	5,366
May	2,674	2,097	4,786
June	2,467	1,902	4,846
July	1,454	1,071	2,943
August	1,531	1,162	2,973
September	1,701	1,314	3,568
October	1,863	1,395	3,563
November	1,784	1,317	3,517
December	1,606	1,202	3,096
January	1,754	1,338	3,284
Total for Period: (% change vs 2021-2022)	23,724 (-29%)	18,067 (-28%)	47,115 (-24%)



Top Pages

Rank	Page	Page Views	Unique Views	Page	Avg. Time on Page
1 (0)	/home	9159	6679		51.06
2 (+1)	/taxidermy	3592	3278		353.65
3 (+2)	/jobs	3527	3056		89.82
4 (-2)	/importance-of-natural-science-collections	1960	1721		336.71
5 (+1)	/article/2509 (Nature Read in Black and White)	1512	1310		360.13
6 (+1)	/journal	1310	817		33.92
7 (+2)	/care-and-conservation	1187	905		200.44
8 (+2)	/publications	1062	847		43.82
9 (+3)	/events-and-workshops	913	704		38.03
10 (+3)	/membership	714	595		136.54

Website updates have included 22 new journal articles and 66 sector job vacancies. Updates have been made to Awards and Bursaries, Committee Nominations, committee member profiles and Natural Science Collections and Environmental Action pages. Event pages have been created for the NatSCA Lunchtime Chats and the NatSCA 2023 conference.

NatSCA's **Bill Pettit Memorial Award**, which is available to members to apply to for projects that support conservation, access and use of natural science collections, has been paused for the past year. This is to allow for time to recruit new trustees and volunteers to support its running. Our thanks to David Gelsthorpe who has administered this award as well as our bursaries. Tannis Davidson is now taking on this role and plans to re-start the award scheme in 2023.

NatSCA has continued to partner on two **national network projects** in 2022. 'DiSSCo UK' (the Distributed System of Scientific Collections UK) is being coordinated by the Natural History Museum London and funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC). This project is working towards securing major investment for a UK infrastructure for digitising natural science collections – accessible to diverse sizes and locations of heritage organisation. 'People and Plants' is an AHRC networking project exploring the modern relevance of biocultural collections, in conversation with indigenous knowledge holders, researchers and museum professionals. The project has funded NatSCA members to attend workshops and share their content on our blog.

It remains a difficult time financially for many individuals and organisations. NatSCA has increased our bursary offer both in terms of number of bursaries and total amount offered, to support members to attend our events. We are also able to write letters of advocacy for specific **collections at risk**, please contact: chair@natsca.org. Through platforms such as our conference, we will continue to platform best practice that helps to sustain collections, and offer opportunities for connecting with colleagues for mutual support.

Election of NatSCA committee:

Trustees form a steering committee with obligations to ensure NatSCA meets our mission, ensure good governance and conform to Charity Commission regulations.

Below are the nominees for NatSCA trustee positions standing for election at this AGM. The Membership Secretary has confirmed that those proposed, those proposing and those seconding are all current personal members of NatSCA. No term will exceed three years without re-election.

Below are the nominated candidates for Co-Chair:

Nominee	Position	Proposed	Seconded
Jen Gallichan (3 year term)	Co-Chair	Yvette Harvey	Laura McCoy
Isla Gladstone (2 year ordinary term)	Co-Chair	David Gelsthorpe	Yvette Harvey

There are two vacancies for Co-Chair and two nominees.

Below is the nominated candidate for Secretary:

Nominee	Position	Proposed	Seconded
Yvette Harvey	Secretary	Jen Gallichan	Rachel Webster

There is one vacancy for Secretary and one nominee.

Below are the nominated candidates standing for Ordinary Member positions on the committee:

Nominee	Position	Proposed	Seconded
Jack Ashby	Ordinary Member	Liz Hide	Matthew Lowe
Eimear Ashe	Ordinary Member	Paolo Viscardi	Amy Geraghty
Clare Booth-Downs	Ordinary Member	Jen Gallichan	Isla Gladstone
Laura McCoy	Ordinary Member	Yvette Harvey	Patti Wood Finkle
Emma Murphy	Ordinary Member	Paolo Viscardi	Amy Geraghty
Glenn Roadley	Ordinary Member	Olivia Beavers	Lukas Large

There are 6 vacancies for Ordinary Members and 6 nominees.

At our AGM in 2022, NatSCA had one vacancy for a Treasurer and no nominees. At that AGM we stated our intention to co-opt to this role. In 2022 we co-opted Belle Buchanan-Smith as our new Treasurer.

All appointments above were agreed or ratified at the AGM.

Vote of thanks:

NatSCA would like to thank everyone who has been involved in delivering our Activities in 2022 for sharing their time, expertise and content.

We would like to thank NatSCA's trustees for their work leading on key activities as well as contributing to the overall running of NatSCA. This includes our new trustees in 2022 - Amy Geraghty, Tannis Davidson and Patti Wood-Finkle, as well as co-opted Treasurer Belle Buchanan-Smith, and former Treasurer Holly Morgenroth. We also thank Justine Aw for highly valued external technical support.

Jen Gallichan and the trustees would like to pass on heartfelt thanks to the great group of volunteers who compile our monthly Digital Digests including Glenn Roadley, Olivia Beavers, Milo Philipps, and Clare Dean (who has now stepped down). Our Editor Jan Freedman has shared thanks to the Editorial Board for their valued support: Bethany Palumbo, Paolo Viscardi and Rob Huxley.

NatSCA would like to extend special thanks to those trustees stepping down from committee this year: David Gelsthorpe, Laura Soul and Lucie Mascord. Their contributions have been highly valued, and they will be very much missed.

NatSCA's strength is in being community-led, and we value your contributions towards this past and future.