

British Bryological Society

A Charity Registered in England and Wales – No. 228851



Annual Report of the Trustees 2024

Annual General Meeting 2025

Annual General Meeting 2025

The next AGM will be held at 4.30 pm on Saturday 4th October 2025 at Lindholme Hall, Doncaster

Agenda

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the last AGM, held at Exeter University on Saturday 7th September 2024
3. Matters arising
4. Annual Report of the Trustees for 2024
5. Accounts and Treasurer's report for 2024
6. Report from Council
7. Election of Officers
 - a. Vice-President
 - b. General Secretary
 - c. Treasurer
 - d. Librarian
 - e. Recorder for Liverworts
 - f. Recorder for Mosses
 - g. Membership Secretary
 - h. Recording Secretary
 - i. Journal Managing Editor
 - j. Elected member
 - k. Elected member
8. Proposed change of charitable status of the BBS to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO).
9. Proposed changes to the Rules of the Society in order to align these with the Society's new status.
10. Appointment of Independent Examiner of the Accounts.
11. Place and date of the next Annual General Meeting
12. Other future meetings
13. Any other business

BRITISH BRYOLOGICAL SOCIETY
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, EXETER UNIVERSITY 2024
Minutes of the Annual General meeting held at 16.30 on Saturday 7th September 2024 at Exeter University

Present: P.G. Martin (President, in the chair) and 27 others

1. Apologies for absence were received from Dr K.J. Adams, D. Adamson, J.W. Bates, Dr N. Bell, Dr R.H. Carter, G. Greiff, Dr. O.L. Pescott, Dr S. Pressel, K. Rogers.

2. Minutes of the last AGM, held at Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, on 10th September 2023.

Following a proposal by **P. Thompson**, seconded by **Dr R. Hodd**, the minutes were approved as a correct record of the meeting and were signed by the President.

3. Matters arising: There were no matters arising.

4. Annual Report of the Trustees for 2023

There were no questions on the Annual report of the Trustees; it was received by the meeting.

5. Accounts and Treasurer's Report for 2023

There were no questions on the Accounts and Treasurer's Report; they had been approved by Council and the Independent Examiner and were accepted by the meeting.

6. Report from Council

The President's Report from Council, which was given at the meeting, will be published as Council Newsletter 41 in the May 2025 issue of *Field Bryology* (No. 133).

7. Election of Officers

No nominations had been received from members as a result of the notice in *Field Bryology* for these or any other posts.

Council made the following nominations for officers who were willing to be re-elected:

Bulletin Editor (Joint) – Dr C.D. Preston

Bulletin Editor (Joint) – A. Branson

Meetings Secretary – P. Thompson

Website Editor – C. Halpin

Education officer – M. Crittenden

The meeting agreed to elect these *en bloc*. Following a proposal from **S. L. Pilkington** seconded by **Dr A. Burton**, these officers were duly elected by a majority vote (to serve for a 2-year period commencing 1st January 2025).

Conservation Officer – Council nominated **Dr Joanne (Jo) Denyer** to take over this vacant post. Following a proposal by **P. Thompson** seconded by **M. Crittenden**, **Dr J. Denyer** was elected with one abstention.

Elected members – Council nominated **Sarah Grinsted** and **Wendy Tyler-Batt** for election to replace **Marion Rayner** and **Karen Rogers**. Proposed by **Dr R. Hodd**, seconded by **C. Shaw** and elected unanimously. To serve for a 3-year period commencing 1st January 2025.

8. Proposed change of name

The President briefly set out the reasons for changing the name of the Society from '**British Bryological Society**' to '**British and Irish Bryological Society**', as agreed at the Autumn 2023 Council meeting. The recording activities of the Society have always encompassed not only Britain but also Ireland. Also, it was felt that the isolated term 'British' could have negative connotations for existing or prospective members in Ireland. Due notice of this proposal to change the name (and consequently the 'Rules') of the Society was published in the May 2024 edition of the BBS Bulletin (*Field Bryology*) No. 131.

The motion was proposed by **Dr C. D. Preston** seconded by **Dr J. Denyer** and agreed unanimously.

The General Secretary advised the meeting that the change of name may not be immediately apparent, as Council are also considering changing the status of the charity to a 'Charitable Incorporated Organisation' (CIO). The procedures involved in both the change of name and change of status, with respect to banking

arrangements and the Charity Commission, are similar. Therefore, Council is planning to manage both as joint exercises to avoid duplication of work.

9. Changes to the Rules

The introduction of a new automated membership system has required some administrative changes to the Rules. Notice of these proposed changes was duly published in the BBS Bulletin (*Field Bryology*) No. 131, May 2024 to be put to the vote at this, the next, AGM. Therefore, it was proposed that item 4 (b)

Subscriptions of the Rules:

“(b) The annual subscription is due in advance on 1 January in each year. Members who have not paid their subscription by 31 March shall not be entitled to receive the Society's publications until the subscription is paid.”

be changed to: *“(b) The annual subscription is due on the date of joining and is renewable thereafter on the same date. New members will be eligible to receive all new publications sent out after they join.”*

Additionally, the option for Family membership is to be discontinued. Therefore, it is proposed that reference to ‘Family Members’ be deleted from paragraph 3 of the Rules - ‘**Membership**’.

This was proposed by **C. Shaw** seconded by **R. Jeffery** and agreed unanimously.

10. Appointment of Independent Examiner of the Accounts

M. Murtagh had agreed to continue as independent examiner of the BBS accounts. Proposed by **Dr E.M. Kungu** seconded by **P. Thompson** and **M. Murtagh** was unanimously elected.

11. Place and date of the next Annual General Meeting

This was yet to be confirmed but the Meetings Secretary, **P. Thompson**, was hopeful that it would be based at Lindholme Old Moor, just outside Doncaster, in the first week of October 2025.

11. Other future meetings

There will be a spring meeting in Freiburg, Germany in April 2025 hosted by **Michael Lüth**, as well as a UK spring meeting to be held in Wharfedale in the 3rd week of March 2025, organised by local secretary, **Gordon Haycock**. In summer 2025, **Rory Hodd** and **Jo Denyer** will be hosting a meeting in Co. Clare, followed by a meeting in Orkney organised by **John Crossley**.

In 2026, a meeting is planned in Slovenia, sometime in May, with summer meetings planned in Co. Waterford and Cumbria.

It is hoped to hold the 2026 AGM meeting at the Natural History Museum with a field base in SE England.

12. Any other business

a) **Professor Jeff Duckett** brought the attention of the meeting to the recent death of **Professor David Cove**, Emeritus Professor of Genetics at Leeds University and a former BBS Council member. He suggested that an obituary should be written for the BBS.

b) **Dr P. Stanley** said that he was looking for some assistance in proofreading his latest material prepared for the Cumulative Index. He estimated about one million words. **Clare Shaw** showed interest in this and offered to discuss the details after the meeting to see how she might be able to help.

There being no further business, the meeting ended when the President's gavel came down at 17.45.

D. J. Scott, General Secretary
September 2024

British Bryological Society

A Charity Registered in England and Wales –
No. 228851

Annual Report of the Trustees for the year 2024

Address of Principal Office: 19 Abbots Grove, Peterborough, PE4 5BP

Trustees at the date this report was approved:

Dr. K.J. Adams (Librarian)
Mr. D. Adamson (Treasurer)
Mr. A. Branson (Vice-President, Bulletin Editor, Joint)
Dr. J. Denyer (Conservation Officer)
Ms. M. Crittenden (Education and Training Officer)
Dr. E.S. Grahame (Elected Member)
Mr. G.R.L. Greiff (Elected Member)
Dr. S. Grinstead (Elected Member) *
Ms. C. Halpin (Website Editor, Membership Secretary)
Dr. R.I.L. Hodd (Elected Member)
Mr. N.G. Hodgetts (Recorder for Liverworts)
Dr. E.M. Kungu (Past-President)
Mr. P.G. Martin (President)
Dr. O.L. Pescott (Recording Secretary)
Ms. S.L. Pilkington (Recorder for Mosses)
Dr. C.D. Preston (Bulletin Editor, Joint)
Ms. P. Thompson (Meetings Secretary)
Mr. D.J. Scott (General Secretary)
Ms. C. Shaw (Elected Member)
Ms. W. Tyler-Batt (Elected Member) *

* Trustees in 2025, but not during 2024

In addition, the following served as Trustees during 2024

Ms. K Rogers, Ms. M. Rayner.

The Constitution of the British Bryological Society

The governing document of the British Bryological Society is The BBS Rules, adopted April 1963, amended 12 April 2003, 6 September 2003, 9 September 2006, 9 September 2023 and 7th September 2024.

Organisation

The British Bryological Society is managed by a Council which meets twice a year; Council members are the Trustees of the Society. The Council comprises the Officers of the Society, the immediate Past President, and six elected members.

Appointment of Trustees

Officers of the Society are elected at an Annual General Meeting for a term of two years. The six Elected Members each serve for three years, two being elected at each Annual General Meeting. Prospective trustees are asked to read the Charity Commission's publication *The Essential Trustee* as a check of their eligibility, and newly appointed trustees are asked to sign the Charity Commission *Trustee Eligibility Declaration*.

Public Benefit Statement

The trustees have complied with the Charity Commission requirement for the BBS to provide identifiable public benefits, and have had due regard to the Charity Commission public benefit guidance when exercising any powers or duties to which the guidance is relevant. Of the descriptions of charitable purposes set out by the Charities Act, the work of the BBS is covered by the following:

b) the advancement of education; f) the advancement of the arts, culture, heritage or science; and i) the advancement of environmental protection or improvement. Details of the ways in which public benefit has been delivered during 2024 are given in the account of BBS achievements below.

Objectives of the BBS

- (a) To promote and advance all branches of bryology throughout the world and especially in relation to bryophytes of the British and Ireland;
- (b) To facilitate the exchange of information among bryologists by organising field meetings, conferences, lectures and exhibitions, publishing the results of bryological study and research, maintaining a library, and other appropriate means;
- (c) To promote in every way possible the conservation of bryophytes.

Activities of the BBS

- (a) Publication of journals and books relating to bryology
- (b) Maintaining a website
- (c) Maintaining a library of bryological literature
- (d) Organisation of meetings and workshops
- (e) Promoting awareness of bryophytes, and providing advice and education
- (f) Gathering information about bryophytes and their natural habitats
- (g) Conservation of bryophytes
- (h) Sponsoring or supporting bryological research

The BBS is registered for Gift Aid.

The BBS neither owns nor leases any land or buildings.

Achievements during 2024

1. Membership and Volunteers

The Society membership has again grown over the last year up to a total of 829 from 785. It has been a busy year for the membership secretary with the difficult task of implementing the new membership management system. The patience and perseverance of the membership secretary in introducing the new system is exemplary and, in the future, will hopefully make for a smoother running system.

The normal rotation of Council members continues, and we are grateful to those who have finished their term as we are to the new Council members.

2. Journal of Bryology

The Society's journal is published in four parts during the year. Volume 46 (2024) had a total of 19 papers on a wide range of topics and included five newly recorded species (Europe, China and Chile). All papers are peer reviewed, and the impact factor is 1.3. Two notable papers of interest in 2024 demonstrate the diverse range of topics covered: 'Bryophyte colonisation on recently deglaciated lands in the European Alps' by Barbara Valle *et al.* and 'Population status and ecology of the globally threatened liverwort *Marsupella profunda* Lindb. in Britain' by Des Callaghan.

3. Field Bryology

Field Bryology is published twice a year and is very well received, and an excellent showcase for the Society.

4. BBS Website

The website continues to provide a valuable resource to the society. It provides the contact point for members giving information on upcoming meetings. Furthermore, it is an invaluable resource on bryophyte species, along with historical information of bryological excursions and bryologists.

5. Other Publications

It is hoped that the 2nd edition of the Field Guide will be published in 2025/6 and is eagerly awaited. Nick Hodgetts has also produced a set of keys which are proving very useful.

6. Library and Sales

The library continues to be housed at Treborth Botanic Gardens, and we are grateful for the use of the facilities provided there. There are continued sales of a number of small items of bryological equipment.

7. Meetings

There were four national meetings this year. Starting with Spring in Lincolnshire which was attended by 30 members who added many records for this area including 17 VCRs. Another meeting in Spring was to Hungary, which gave members who travelled the opportunity of seeing species not known in the UK, and, importantly, a chance to interact informally with European bryologists. Six species new to Hungary were found on the meeting. In the summer, 19 members attended the meeting on the Isle of Islay and 11 VCRs were added. The AGM took place in Exeter with extra days being added giving more opportunities for field excursions. The local groups continue to thrive and in particular they encourage beginners.

8. Education and Training

Education and training is a cornerstone of the society's aims and this has been particularly evident in our centenary year. A whole range of workshops at both the national and local level have taken place. Many members have given their time freely for these to take place. In Scotland, a bryophyte ID course took place with the Water of Leith Conservation Trust in Edinburgh. In Ireland, oceanic bryophytes were studied for a group of ecologists. In England, *Sphagnum* ID and ecology courses took place in Hampshire and Devon, and in Wales a guided Moss Walk and microscope training took place in Treborth. Nationally, a pleurocarp workshop took place in Preston Montford. Added to all this are the many local groups that continue to teach beginners both in the field and with day-sessions using microscopes.

9. Recording Mosses and Liverworts

In 2024, there were 202 vice-county records for mosses and 58 for liverworts. Amongst these records were many notable finds. *Didymodon tophaceus* subsp. *erosus* was new to Britain and *Cephaloziella integerrima* was new to Wales. The very rare species *Philonotis cernua* was found in Scotland.

Financial Review 2024

Accounts and Treasurer's Report

Amounts in this report are rounded to the nearest pound

Receipts and payments accounts for the year ending 31 December 2024

		General fund	Bequest fund	2024 Total		2023 Total
Receipts				£		£
AGM & Meetings income		1,134		1,134		0
Atlas sales				0		0
Bequest Fund grant repaid				0		750
Calendar sales		458		458		450
Census catalogue sales		20		20		15
Donations Bequest				0		0
Donations General		1,000		1,000		230
European Bryaceae royalties		723		723		562
Field Bryology				0		0
Field Guide sales		13,825		13,825		17,151
Gift Aid recovered		2,601		2,601		0
Interest & dividends Bequest			2,206	2,206		2,528
Interest & dividends General		10,719		10,719		8,017
Journal expenses from T&F		9,076		9,076		9,076
Journal royalties from T&F		14,545		14,545		13,319
Lenses & Forceps sales		827		827		437
Liverwort Supplement sales				0		60
Membership subscriptions		16,188		16,188		19,435
Other publications				0		0
Workshops		5,770		5,770		0
		76,887	2,206	79,092		72,030
Payments						
AGM & Meetings		-1,941		-1,941		-3,064
Annual report		-486		-486		-483
Bryophyte Key		-2,000		-2,000		0
Calendar costs				0		-610
Courses & Workshops		-6,963		-6,963		0
Equipment purchases		-4,134		-4,134		0
Field Bryology printing		-10,108		-10,108		-9,369
Field Guide New		-1,405		-1,405		0
Field Guide Old		-15,080		-15,080		-5,552
Grants Bequest			-1,755	-1,755		-2,142
Insurance		-969		-969		-914
iRecord expenses		-1,344		-1,344		0
Journal costs		-18,244		-18,244		-16,578
Journal editorial expenses		-9,076		-9,076		-9,076
Lenses & forceps				0		-2,018
Liverwort Supplement sales paid				0		-187

Membership management system		-3,780		-3,780		0
PayPal charges		-430		-430		-608
Posts & sundries		-657		-657		-528
Stripe charges		-42		-42		0
Trustees' expenses		-292		-292		0
Website		-3,185		-3,185		-5,754
		-80,136	-1,755	-81,891		-56,883
Net (decrease)/ increase in bank & cash		-3,249	451	-2,799		15,147
Investment gains		3,301	2,341	5,642		16,797
Increase in funds		52	2,792	2,843		31,944
Funds to begin		314,714	98,164	412,878		380,933
Transfers between funds		-2,406	2,406	0		0
Funds to end		312,359	103,362	415,721		412,877

Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024

1. Accounting policies

The accounts are prepared on the Receipts and Payments basis under section 133 of the Charities Act and in accordance with Charity Commission guidance. All funds are unrestricted.

2. Bequest fund grants

Type of activity or project supported	Individual / institution	Number of grants made	£
Attendance at courses	Individual	2	500
Bryological research	Individual	3	1,255
Total			1,755

3. Trustee payments & remuneration

Professional fees £3,550
Number of trustees £

4. Trustee expenses

Reimbursement of outlays on behalf of Society for 7 trustee £1,596

5 Designated fund

Within unrestricted funds is the Bequest Fund, administered by the Bequest Committee with the objects of helping beginners to attend courses, promoting bryological research, and assisting the results of bryological studies to be published. Awards may only be made to members of the Society. Awards are normally limited to the amount of interest received from Bequest Funds investments. Income not expended may be used to pay future awards.

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of the British Bryological Society

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the British Bryological Society for the year ended 31st December 2024.

Respective Responsibilities of the trustees and the examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. They consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act') and that an independent examination is needed.

My responsibilities:

- to examine the accounts in accordance with section 145 of the Act
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention

Independent examiner's statement

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

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

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



MT Murtagh FCCA
49 Farleigh Fields
Orton Wistow
Peterborough PE2 6YB
30th April 2025

Officers' Reports for 2024

General Secretary

At the AGM in 2024, it was agreed that the Society should change its name to '*British Bryological Society*' to '*British and Irish Bryological Society*'. This was both to reflect our recording and mapping activities and also to be inclusive of all Irish bryologists who may have been put off from participating in what might have appeared to be an exclusively 'British' Society.

At around the same time, a working group was set up to look into changing the Society's status from a 'standard' unincorporated charity to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). This is a trend followed recently by charities similar to the BBS and its chief advantage is to limit the liability of the trustees and members of the organisation. This work is ongoing to prepare recommendations to Council and to the members.

As mentioned briefly at the last AGM, it makes sense to combine the administrative effort required to achieve both these goals. This is why the agreed name change has not been obvious in the latter part of 2024. I am confident, though, that both changes will be implemented before the end of 2025.

Jeff Scott, March 2025

Field Bryology Editors

Two issues were published in 2024. As usual the May issue (104 pages) was longer than the November issue (72 pages), and each was eight pages longer than the corresponding issue in 2023. Reports of taxa new to Britain and Ireland are now a regular feature of *Field Bryology* and this year they covered *Didymodon tophaceus* subsp. *erosus* and three segregates resulting from the revision of *Trichostomum brachydontium sens. lat.* Ecological studies of rare species also featured prominently amongst the articles in 2024. We thank all contributors for their hard work in preparing articles, and our loyal proof-readers Agneta Burton, Sue Grahame and Mark Lawley.

Andrew Branson & Chris Preston, January 2025

Website Editor

During 2024 the website took rather a back seat as much of my time was taken up by the new Membership Management system. Routine content maintenance, of course, continued, but there were no significant additions to the site. Unfortunately, we have not (so far) been able to find anyone to help with content editing on a regular basis.

Sharon Pilkington and Jonathan Sleath continued to work on the Species Finder pages, and when time permitted, I continued taking and uploading images. We receive regular compliments on the Species Finder from people all over the world, and requests to use our images for training purposes and in publications, which is gratifying.

Thank you to those members who contribute images or text to the website, and/or feedback on errors and broken links. Please keep them coming! Thanks also to Castlegate IT, who keep our website up and running; they are always very responsive on the rare occasions we have a problem

Claire Halpin, January 2024

Librarian

Sales:

Census Catalogue (update) 2008	—
Census Catalogue (update) 2021	1
BBS <i>Bulletins</i>	-
<i>Field Bryology</i>	-
English Names of Bryophytes	— (on line)
<i>Practical Bryophyte Chromosomes</i> (Newton)	1
<i>Collecting Bryos. in the Tropics</i> (O'Shea)	1
Chinese x20 lenses	6
Chinese x30 lenses	3
Idealtek Stainless steel forceps	36
Mini-blade packs of 10	11
Micrometer Eyepiece Scales	2

Loans:

Micrometer calibration slide	—
Chinese Microscope	1

Free pdfs:

Microscope techniques 1 & 2	6
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There were 19 standard sales orders in 2024. Only one additional copy was purchased of the updated 2021 *Census Catalogue of British & Irish Bryophytes* since the its publication on line. 110 miniblades have been extracted from twin-bladed safety razors and supplied for cutting leaf sections. In addition to sales items, six beginners have again taken advantage of the free pdfs of Microscope Techniques for Beginners and Bryophyte Microscopy tips during the year. We are continuing to exchange *Field Bryology* for the Belgian *Muscillanea* and Swiss *Meylania*, and *J. Bryol.* for various Polish publications.

Ken Adams, February 2025

Membership Secretary

Membership status

Membership continued to grow during 2024, although the rate of growth has perhaps slowed slightly compared to last year. At the end of the year, our membership stood at 829 individual members, up from 785 last year, broken down as follows (2023 figures in brackets):

Honorary: 11 (11)

Ordinary: 716 (686)

Junior: 6 (8)

Loyalty: 21 (17)

Student: 75 (63)

Institutional members remain unchanged at 8 subscriptions.

During 2024, changes to the membership can be summarised as follows:

158 members joined

21 members either resigned or we were notified of their decease*

93 members allowed their membership to lapse with no contact

* To clarify, this is the number of members who did not renew for 2024, but who may have notified us of their intention during 2023 or early 2024. It excludes members who paid for 2024, but resigned or told us they would not be renewing again at some point during 2024.

As usual, there is a high turnover of members who join for a year but then allow their membership to lapse. This year saw more members allow their membership to lapse, perhaps because of the rising

cost of living. Overall though, the membership is still growing, with a net gain of 44 members by the end of 2024.

116 members have now registered for Gift Aid since re-starting the register in 2022. This is in part due to the implementation of a new Google form this year, which makes it easier to register (and opt out) online.

Membership system update

During 2024, a considerable amount of effort was put into configuring and testing the new membership management system. Our requirements are quite complex, but with some thought it was possible to configure the system to cater for all our needs. At one point, the project was almost abandoned because it was felt that the risk of existing members not fully transitioning to the new system was too high. An estimated 300 members were paying by standing order – which still requires manual processing in the new system – so much depended on persuading members to cancel standing orders and register using the new payment methods. However, it was decided that by dint of frequent reminders to cancel standing orders, and reducing the readily available payment options, the majority might be persuaded to switch.

The new system went live in early November; existing members were automatically transferred over to the new system with temporary subscriptions that expired on 31st January 2025. This was designed to give members a month to renew their membership.

Between November and the New Year, 28 new members joined the BBS using the new system and there were no complaints! Significantly too, the process was completely automatic, requiring no time or effort on our part.

Communication was key to ensuring the success of the system, and I thank all members for bearing with my frequent nagging emails throughout the year. I hope that the process of renewal was relatively painless, and anticipate that it will make things easier for both members and membership secretary in the future.

Claire Halpin, February 2025

Education and Training Officer

Many workshops and training days have occurred this year across the length and breadth of Britain and Ireland, from western Ireland to eastern England from northern Scotland to Devon. They have covered specific groups, such as Sphagna and pleurocarps, as well as instruction on using microscopes in general to studying the microscopic reproductive structures of bryophytes. Target audiences were beginners to intermediates, amateurs to consultants and university students to junior school pupils. More than 20 members of the Society are involved in delivering this training, with many more giving help to individuals and groups. Many of these workshops are delivered free of charge. There is no doubt that the Society is delivering one of the main planks of its responsibility as a charity, education, through the generosity of its members both financially and in giving their time. More workshops are being offered through the BBS website, as well as the Field Studies Council. However, the value of local group participation in training at the grass roots level should not be underestimated. Examples of workshops that the BBS has supported financially include a five day Liverwort workshop at Beinn Eighe NNR, based near Kinlochewe on Loch Maree, in October 2024. Thirteen participants spent five days studying the liverworts of the northern hepatic mats (a threatened and unique bryophyte community), as well as the bryophyte flora of bogs and oceanic woodland. The diversity of bryophytes was astonishing and thrilled the participants. A huge thank you to Nick Hodgetts, National Recorder for Liverworts, for the effort put into this workshop. This was followed shortly by a Pleurocarps Workshop based at Preston Montford Field Study Centre in November 2024. Workshop

leader was Philippa Thompson, with lots of help from Martin Godfrey and Peter Martin. This was very successful. Of note was the efficacy of using a WhatsApp group to coordinate group activities. Using this particular medium leads to greater group cohesion and a better follow up. The latter was ably demonstrated in the Reproductive Structures workshop led by Jeff Duckett in February 2025, where images of gametangia are still being swapped between members of the group three weeks later. The Committee would like to thank all those involved in formal training, as well as anyone willing to share their expertise.

Two further workshops are planned, namely another Reproductive Structures workshop, as the first was oversubscribed, and the return of the Acrocarps Workshop in January 2026 run by Sharon Pilkington. No doubt this will also be oversubscribed. All these workshops were aimed at intermediate bryologists, that is those who have had some experience of using keys and microscopes in the context of bryophytes. It has proven difficult to ensure that applicants understand the level of expertise needed. There is a pressing need to train the bryologists of the future given the lack of formal bryological education at Secondary and Tertiary levels.

The Committee has also agreed that the time and financial commitment of trainers needs to be acknowledged. The Society will now be able to offer trainers a standard daily training rate, as well as expenses. Trainers and helpers must be encouraged to at least submit expenses to the Treasurer and the Education and Training Officer supported by the usual receipts. Participants in BBS supported workshops should expect to contribute to their running. Participants will be encouraged to take out travel insurance in the event they are unable to attend, as the Society will not refund fees.

There are plans to organise a Recorders Conference in early 2026, before the Spring Meeting. The venue and speakers/contributors are being sort. This conference is not just for Vice County Recorders but for anyone with an interest in recording bryophytes. However, BBS supported workshops, as well as the Conference, will only be available to members of the Society.

The presentations which have been uploaded to the Society's Google Drive, which are available to members, is growing in usage. As many presentations to groups inevitably end up on-line, it is important that we ensure the correct licensing and acknowledgement of images and diagrams. These will be checked to ensure compliance by the Education and Training Officer.

Nick Hodgetts has now finished compiling and checking his Walson-type keys. These have already been successfully used by large numbers of enthusiasts. They are now ready for publication. The second edition of the Field Guide will link in to these keys where appropriate. Thank you to Nick for all his hard work.

The Society has now acquired a range of equipment to support training and education. We have five stereo microscopes, as well as five high power microscopes which are available for groups to use. In addition, we have just acquired an iScope compound microscope with HDMI camera which can be used in training involving microscope work. We also have a digital projector and self adhesive white board for those creative types. We will be working on how best to ensure these are available to as many groups as possible.

Margaret Crittenden, March 2024

Meetings Secretary

There were five National Meetings organised for 2024.

There was a UK Spring Meeting in Lincolnshire in March organised jointly by Mags Crittenden and Steven Heathcote. There were seven days of field excursions and a dedicated microscope space for

the week. It was attended by 30 members and 23 sites were visited; 2037 records were made of 236 taxa, with 17 New Vice County Records and 5 Debrackets

There was a seven-day meeting in Hungary in April organised by Peter Erzberger, with field support from Beata Papp and administrative support from Pocs Bence. Twenty-one people attended, eight of whom came from European countries outside the UK and Ireland, including the organisers Peter and Beata from Hungary. There were 640 records of 274 taxa from 13 different localities and six species were recorded new to Hungary: *Tortella humilis*, *Pterygoneuron kozlovii*, *Microbryum davallianum* var. *mucticum*, and three confirmed: *Microbryum davallianum* var. *conicum*, *Didymodon desertorum* and *Ceratodon conicum*.

There was a seven-day field meeting on Islay in June organised by Sharon Yardy, with field support from Gordon Rothero. This was attended by 19 people, two of whom came from outside the UK and Ireland. 334 taxa were recorded with a total of over 2700 records from 32 different monads

The 2025 AGM was held at Exeter University in September and was organised jointly by Andrew Branson and Philippa Thompson. There were three days of field excursions and a full programme of paper readings on the day of the AGM. The meeting was attended by 36 people. Seven sites were visited during the meeting.

Regional groups were active during the year. There were meetings in Ireland, London, Gloucestershire, Wessex, Cambridge, Hampshire, Welsh borders, North Wales, Cumbria, Lothians, Galloway, Worcestershire, Hertfordshire, North East Scotland, Warwickshire, and occasional meetings elsewhere around the country. The BBS microscopes were used to facilitate informal microscope days in North Wales and in Gloucestershire, as well as their use for more formal education workshops. The two-day meeting, in September, organised jointly with the Wild Flower Society, in Shropshire attracted no members of the BBS.

The Society is grateful to all those involved in the hard work of organising these meetings, as well as to the attendees, who have contributed their time and effort to make them a success.

Philippa Thompson, February 2024

Recorder for Liverworts

A total of 58 liverwort specimens have been processed this year. Compared with last year, in terms of numbers I has been a good year for England and Wales, while Scotland and Ireland are slightly down. Once again there has been nothing from the Isle of Man or the Channel Islands. Overall there have been more submissions than in 2023, but from fewer recorders. Matt Sutton has been particularly busy in Wales (and on holiday in the Outer Hebrides), coming up with 8 new county records; Nick Hodgetts, Lionel Pike and Sharon Pilkington contributed 6 vouchers apiece, David Long 5, and Andrew Branson, Ciarán Flynn, Liz Kungu, Gordon Rothero and Jonathan Sleath 3. Everyone else mentioned contributed one or two each. As usual, a number of vouchers were joint contributions.

A striking feature of this year's records has been a continuation of the apparent range expansion of small Lejeuneaceae in the south-west. *Cololejeunea microscopica* has turned up new to south-west England, at no fewer than three sites in Devon and Cornwall, as well as one in mid-Wales. Lionel Pike found *Harpalejeunea mollerii* at a site on Dartmoor, and Andrew Branson had *Lejeunea patens* in Somerset. It may be significant that recent data from the Met Office show an increase in rainfall in southern England over the last decade. In a similar vein, *Leptoscyphus cuneifolius* has been recorded for the first time in mid-Wales, and *Solenostoma paroicum* in Devon.

The BBS Spring Meeting in Lincoln did not produce much in the way of new vice-county records, unsurprisingly in this liverwort-poor part of the country, but Sharon Pilkington did find *Frullania*

tamarisci on a willow, a welcome debracketing for a species not seen in Nottinghamshire since one H. Fisher recorded it somewhere near Mansfield sometime before 1930. The Islay meeting was more productive, resulting in several interesting new records. David Long found *Moerckia flotoviana* in a dune system, then later was delighted to find *Aneura mirabilis* under *Sphagnum* in a boggy woodland next to the Ardnahoe distillery. Other new records or debracketings were *Marchantia polymorpha* subsp. *polymorpha*, *Cephaloziella rubella* and *Diplophyllum obtusifolium*. Elsewhere in Scotland, the Edinburgh/Borders group found *Eremonotus myriocarpus* and *Scapania calcicola* on rich calcareous ground in Dumfriesshire, both new to southern Scotland, and David Long found *Phaeoceros laevis*, a rare plant in this part of the world, in a garden near Peebles. Nick Hodgetts also found *S. calcicola* in a little-explored part of a very well-known coastal site in West Ross. Gordon Rothero discovered *Barbilophozia kunzeana* on a mountain crag in Argyll.

Des Callaghan's record of *Cephaloziella integerrima* new to Wales represents a significant range expansion for this species. Matt Sutton's discovery of *Sphaerocarpos michelii* in a Pembrokeshire car park is almost certainly an unintentional introduction, but nonetheless an interesting new plant for the Welsh list. Matt also had *Lophozia longidens* in Powys, and *Scapania gymnostomophila* on Cader Idris, both plants very rarely recorded in Wales. Jonathan Shanklin found *Ricciocarpos natans* in artificial ponds in North Wales, another possible introduction of a liverwort recorded previously only a few times in Wales. Late in the year, Sam Bosanquet found a new site in South Wales for the rare *Biantheridion undulifolium*.

Back in Devon, Lionel Pike made a further interesting discovery by finding *Marsupella sphacelata* on Dartmoor, while Andrew Branson had *Odontoschisma francisci* on a streamside bank. Elsewhere in England, the most significant records have probably been Sharon Pilkington's *Sphenobolus minutus* in North Hampshire and Dave Shaw's *Scapania cuspiduligera* in the Lake District. It is pleasing that Jonathan Hughes found *Mesoptychia badensis* and *Cephalozia curvifolia* in the middle of Lincolnshire, previously a conspicuous lacuna in the distribution of both species. The submission of three new county records of *Fossombronina incurva* indicate that we may be getting better at spotting this elusive – but not uncommon – little plant.

In a rather quiet year for Ireland, most of the vouchers have represented debracketings. Although *Lejeunea mandonii* was refound in 2021 (at the site near Killarney where Jean Paton first found it in 1966), it was overlooked as a debracketing until now. *Reboulia hemisphaerica* was rediscovered by Rory Hodd at a site in Co. Londonderry where it was last seen in 1836 by David Moore. Shane Farrell found *Lepidozia cupressina* in Howth near Dublin, where it had somehow escaped detection since McArdle found it there in 1895. Co. Armagh is very under-recorded, so the debracketings of *Gymnocolea inflata* and *Marsupella emarginata* by Ciarán Flynn are welcome. A small population of *Scapania cuspiduligera* was found new to Northern Ireland in a dune system in Co. Londonderry.

Nick Hodgetts, February 2025

Recorder for Mosses

In 2024 I received 202 new vice-county moss records and amendments to the census catalogue, which represents a relatively quiet recording year. The records were submitted by 58 individuals (as first-named recorders) from 82 British and Irish vice-counties. Around 25% of these were of taxa added to the British and Irish lists following recent taxonomic revisions e.g. *Dicranella varia* s.str., *Leucobryum*, and *Racomitrium heterostichum/obtusum*. Four new moss taxa added to the national checklists in 2024 included 3 new species segregated from *Trichostomum brachydontium* and *Didymodon tophaceus* subsp. *erosus*, found new to Britain by Seán O'Leary.

The spring field meeting, based near Lincoln in March, was responsible for around 10% of the new vice-county records and amendments. This impressive number demonstrates that even an area considered by some to lack diversity can in fact turn out to be surprisingly interesting when a large

group of competent bryologists is let loose there.

Ireland rarely disappoints in the records stakes and 2024 was no exception. Although hard to single out particular records, highlights included Rory Hodd's finds of the very rare *Plagiothecium platyphyllum* in Co. Kerry, a new population of the rare oceanic moss *Sematophyllum demissum* in Co. Clare and only the second verified find of *Campylophyllopsis calcarea* in any Irish vice-county from Co. Fermanagh. Also in Fermanagh, Nick Hodgetts collected seven new/recent moss records in the course of surveys at the Cliffs of Magho, and notable others, such as *Kandaea elodes* and *Bryum intermedium* in Co. Londonderry.

In Scotland, the range of the newly discovered *Bryoerythrophyllum campylocarpum* has been extended in the south-west by Liz Kungu and Bob Merritt; this unremarkable-looking little acrocarp is now known from 13 vice-counties across Britain and Ireland. I also received a remarkable record of *Philonotis cernua*, found (with its tell-tale capsules) in West Sutherland in 2017 by Dave Shaw. This very rare species has not been seen in Britain for a very long time, so Dave's find is very welcome indeed.

Highlights from Wales included Matt Sutton's *Tortella densa* in Cardiganshire, only the second Welsh population and a respectable distance from the first, on the Great Orme. Nearby, on Ynys Môn (Anglesey), Steven Heathcote spotted the inconspicuous and scarce *Hygroamblystegium humile*, whilst in south Wales Charles Hipkin found a new population of the rare *Hedwigia ciliata* var. *ciliata*.

In England, Phil Cutt and Frances Watkins came across only the fifth vice-county record of the very rare (and photogenic) *Grimmia crinita* on a wall near Oxford. Meanwhile, surveys of oceanic woodland in Devon and Cornwall yielded a suite of notable mosses (and liverworts) including Lionel Pike's *Daltonia splachnoides* from Dartmoor and, in Cornwall, *Sematophyllum demissum*, new to England.

Sharon Pilkington, February 2025

Recording Secretary's Report

In 2024, the main achievement was the release of the new field and Excel-based recording cards, updated to reflect the latest accepted names and taxonomy. These can now be found on the BBS website Recording pages at: <https://www.britishbryologicalsociety.org.uk/recording/recording-cards/>. Thank you to Sam Amy for heading this project, to Sam Bosanquet, Rory Hodd, Sharon Pilkington and Gordon Rothero for reviewing regional changes to the cards prompted by Sam's review of record frequencies, and to Claire Halpin and Chris Preston for technical feedback on the Excel cards. Note that we do occasionally release new versions of these cards between the large taxonomic updates (the field and Excel card filenames reflect this versioning), so please check occasionally that you are using the latest versions. The other main task in 2024 has been the work for transitioning the BBS Oracle database (an off-line repository hosted at UKCEH) to the online iRecord platform. This is not the place to recount all the work associated with this move, but I can report that the BBS Council Working Group on this topic continue to test and improve the platform, and to develop guidance. Thank you to the current Working Group (Claire Halpin, Sharon Pilkington, George Greiff and Jonathan Sleath) for continued support, and to other recorders who have been engaging with iRecord more at my request (or indeed from their own initiatives). More information on this topic will be forthcoming as 2025 progresses.

Twenty-six datasets were directly received in 2024, although currently only six of these have been processed for database loading. This is partly due to a focus on other work relating to the iRecord transition, and partly due to the fact that BRC's botanical data assistant, Sam Amy, left for pastures new in September 2024. No doubt BBS recorders will join me in wishing her all the best in her new role, and in thanking her for her hard work over the past three years. UKCEH have recruited a replacement, and we look forward to welcoming them to the organisation in the spring

of 2025.

As usual we have assisted with numerous other data enquiries this past year, including over 35 direct requests for the Society's raw data or summaries. As usual, the number of direct requests to the Recording Secretary does not capture the numerous downloads of BBS data from the NBN or GBIF: according to publicly available NBN data for example, around 17 million copies of BBS records were downloaded in 2024 (this number excludes those downloaded with justification "Testing").

Changes to our Regional Recorders in 2024 were as follows: Sarah Grinsted replaced Andrew Branson in v.c. 8 (South Wiltshire); Jeff Scott replaced Mick Burton in v.c. 31 (Huntingdonshire); Wendy Tyler-Batt took on v.c. 36 (Herefordshire), which had been vacant since Ian Draycott stepped down in 2023; Ruby Bye was added as a co-recorder to v.c. 46 (Cardiganshire), joining Matt Sutton; Hamlyn "Lyn" Jones adopted v.c. 113 (Channel Islands), an area that had lacked a Recorder for over ten years; and Shane Farrell replaced Melinda Lyons in v.c. H21 (County Dublin), who herself has switched to v.c. H31 (County Louth). On behalf of the BBS, I thank all retiring Recorders for their efforts during their tenures. Regional Recorder details for each vice-county can be viewed under the relevant vice-county page on the BBS website (see <https://www.britishbryologicalsociety.org.uk/recording/vice-county-maps>). Note that I keep a spreadsheet-based record of all appointments as well.

As already noted above, in 2024 I was indebted to Sam Amy for her support. Thank you to other BRC staff as well, including Robin Hutchinson and Martin Harvey for support with iRecord-related issues, and to Claire Halpin on the BBS side for website updates.

Dr Oliver Pescott, Biological Records Centre (UKCEH Wallingford), 3rd February 2025

